

THE
BLESSEDNESSE
OF BEING
BOUNTIFULL:
OR,
Our Blessed Saviours
usual PROVERB,
Opened, Asserted, and Practically
Improved.

BY SIMON FORD, D. D.



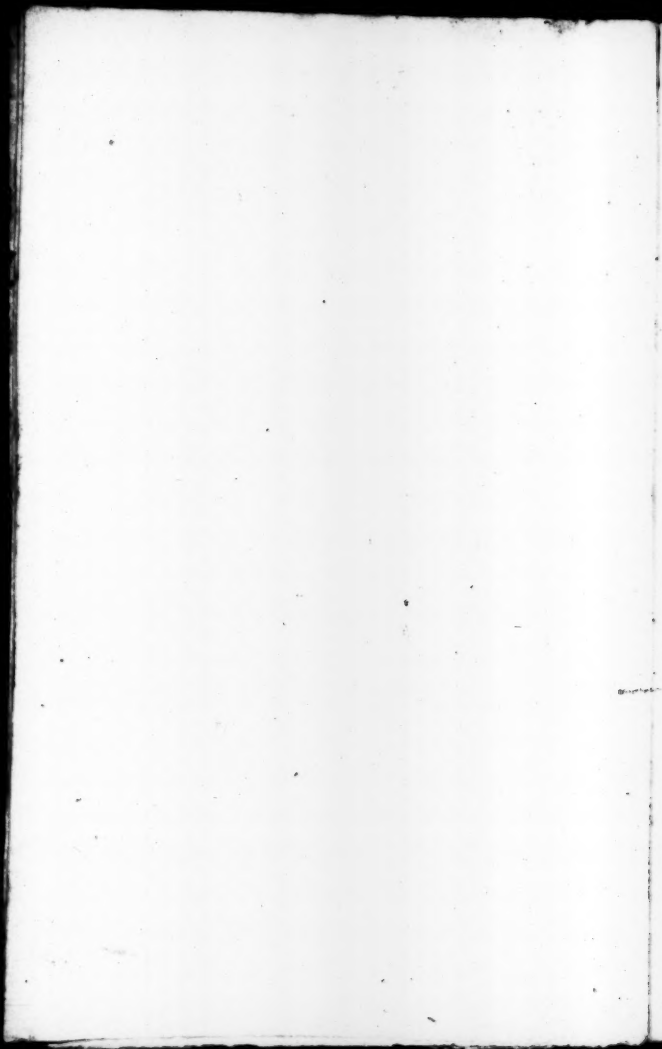
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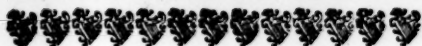
100. to. 92



VIRO
NATALIBUS, ERUDITIONE,
Omnimodisq; VIRTUTIBUS Nobilissimo,
GEORGIO Baroni de BERKELEY;
IN ALBUM
CURATORUM HONORIFICORUM
HOSPITII Vulgo DICTI
DE BRIDEWELL,
Alteriusque de BETHLEM,
DEMISSIONE SUI GRATIOSA
NUPER ADSCRIPTO;
ET PROINDE IN HAC PAGELLA
(HONORIS ergo) SEPARATIM
NOMINANDO:

HUNC
(TANQUAM TESTI EXPERTO)
De BEATITUDINE BENEFICENTIAE
TRACTATULUM,
Humillimè Offert,
OMNI OBSERVANTIAE GENERE
ADDICTISSIMUS,
SIMON FORD.





TO THE
RIGHT WORSHIPFULL,
Sir William Turner, K^t
PRESIDENT,

With his Assistants, the Governours of
the two HOSPITALS of

Bridewell and Bethlem.

Gentlemen,

IF, (as it hath of late in like cases been customary) I should plead the Authority of your Court, as that which hath without any inclination of mine own, solely prevailed with me to print this Discourse; I must ingenuously confess, it would be no other than a modester kinde of dissimulation with you and the World.

For I must own, that when I delivered the substance of it from the Pulpit in two Sermons (the one at

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the Spittle before the Lord Maior then being, and the Aldermen of this City, on Wednesday in Easter-week, 1672. and the other, which was but the former (at the Instance of some of you) repeated with some suitable enlargements, in your own Chappel of Bridewell at your late General Meeting, 1673.) I was not without thoughts of publishing it: because my principal Design in preaching it being (as in Duty I am bound, having by your favour been elected and hitherto continued Preacher to one of them) to promote the good of the two Hospitals under your Government; I justly conceived that the more publick I made it, the more effectually it was like to answer my end.

*Only I must withall acknowledge, that the general acceptance which it found from those of you that heard me in both Auditories, and the testification of your Desires (by an express Order of Court) to have it printed, concurring with mine own
incli.*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

inclinations ; gave me a great additional encouragement to adventure it thus to the publick View.

Concerning the success of which undertaking, I am not altogether out of hope that it may in some sort answer my desires ; considering the serious Importance of the weighty Argument it handles, and the great suitableness of the matter contained in it, to the blowing up those few sparks of Charity, which (notwithstanding these hard Times) remain yet unextinguished in the breasts of many worthy Citizens and others ; into such Acts and Expressions, as the great Exigences of this City, and particularly, of these your Hospitals, do require.

However, if my hopes of success upon others should unhappily fail me ; yet I have reason to believe that my Endeavours herein will meet with a favourable acceptance and compliance from you, who have already given me so great a pledge of it, in commanding its publication.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

I shall not farther enlarge this Dedicatory Address to you, because I shall thereby the longer detain you from the Discourse it self; which I hope you had no other design in calling for, than that you might read and practise it, and thereby acquire that Blessedness to your selves unto which it directs. Which also, that you may obtain, is and shall be the constant Prayer of

(Right Worshipfull,)

Your Obliged Servant

in the Work of

our Lord Jesus,

Simon Ford.

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Acts 20. 35.
— *It is more blessed to
give than to receive.*

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משל

This Dominion, (besides what the worth and weight of their matter gives them) is in a great
B degree

degree conferred upon them, by the great Reputation of their Authors; who (being ordinarily either *wise*, or *great*, or *prosperous*, beyond the rate of other men) contribute that veneration to their Speeches, which is wont to be given to their Persons. Which veneration also they obtain the rather, because they are looked on by Posterity as the Abstracts of those grand Principles, by the Practice whereof those eminent Persons arrived at that degree of excellency in which they were placed; and are therefore esteemed the most certain and compendious measures, by which the actions of all others can be governed, who design to arrive at the same degree of eminency by their examples.

And hence (probably) it is, that the wisdom of God thought meet to place a Book of such Sayings in the Canon of Holy Scripture, with the great name of *Solomon*,

lomon, (who was a man most eminently both *wise*, and *great*, and *prosperous*) prefixed; that the Principles of true Religion and Vertue, of which that Book is composed, might not be destitute even of that lower degree of recommendation (superadded to their divine Authority) which results from the credit of humane Testimonials.

To shorten this Preface: It is upon this account that I chose at this time to speak from this Text, which is much of the nature of a Proverbial Paradox, which not only contains in it a great Truth, and therein the most powerful motive to Works of Charity that can be couched in so few words; but is withall recommended from the excellency of its Authour beyond any of that kind. For supposing all those that are digested into that one Book of Holy Scripture before mentioned to be originally *Solomon's*, (which yet

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some question, and only entitle him to the collection of the greatest part of them;) yet, this *Proverb* is quoted from an Author in all the mentioned respects, far beyond both him and all other men: one that was more truly than he, *wiser than all men*; for he was the *wisdom of God*: one that was infinitely greater than he, or any other meer man; for he was *the Power of God*, and of whose *greatness* even that of *Solomon* himself was but a Type or shadow: and one that was also more *prosperous* than he, and all the most successful men in the world; seeing the greatest design that ever was undertaken in the World (the redemption of mankind from all their greatest, that is spiritual, dangers and enemies) *prospered in his hand*.

1 King. 4.
31.
1 Cor. 1.
24.
Psal. 72. 8,
9, 10.
If. 53. 10.

For it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself whom our Apostle (having occasion to make use of this *Proverb*, in his Visitation Sermon

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to the Elders of *Ephesus*, of which my Text is a part) avouches to be the utterer and frequent user of it. *Ye ought* (saith he) *to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said* (and it was his usual saying, for so such forms of quoting commonly import) that it is *more blessed, or rather blessed*, (for *μαλλον* will bear both senses) *to give, than to receive.*

And though we read not this saying of our Saviour, *in terminis*, in any of the Gospels of the Holy Evangelists who professedly undertook the penning of his Speeches and Actions; yet have we not therefore any sufficient Reason to doubt the Truth of the Apostles Quotation; seeing it was not (as one of them professeth for himself, and it is with the same reason to be so judged of all the rest) the design of those holy Penmen to give a perfect numerical account of every individual Passage of our Saviours Life;

John 20:
30, 31.
21, 25.

but only to commend so much of it to Posterity, as might (without tiring the Reader and confounding his memory with the length) suffice to beget a Faith that he was the Son of God, and to instruct him sufficiently in those Doctrines that were necessary to salvation. Yea, rather we have very weighty reasons to justify the Apostle in this Quotation against all exception.

I. Because it is a saying, which doth so aptly sute some others, recorded from his mouth by the Evangelists; and which some Interpreters mention, to salve this Objection by Equivalency. For we find him in his first Sermon commending *mercifulness* to his Disciples, under the same encouragement of *Blessedness*; and promising in the account he gives them of the last Judgment, that he will then pronounce them eternally *blessed*, who extend their bounty to him in his members; and

Matt. 5. 7.

and those *eternally cursed*, who have in such good deeds been notoriously negligent and defective, *Matth. 25. 34. to the end.*

2. Because our Apostle quotes it before those to whom the very form of his Speech supposeth it to be as well known as to himself; if not to some of them better, who (it may be) personally conversed with the Lord Jesus, (which he himself did not) and heard it from his own lips. For he tells it them not as a new thing that they knew not before, but onely bids them remember it; intimating that their own memories could not but attest that it was his saying to whom he attributed it.

3. Add we to this Evidence, that the natural import of the Doctrine herein contained is such, that it cannot with like *Decorum* be ascribed to any man, as to him, who was himself (electively) the *greatest Giver*, and the *least Receiver* that ever was in this world;

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and one (therefore) who must be supposed to have most amply experimented the *blessedness* it speaks of, by the constant practice of it.

4. Mind we, *lastly*, that the *saying* it self is a most *divine saying*, every way befitting that mouth which spake the very thoughts of *God's bosome* to men; seeing it so aptly and adequately expresseth the very inward sentiments and satisfactions of the Divine Essence, which imployes it self incessantly in being the inexhaustible Fountain of *all good givings* and *perfect gifts* to his Creatures, upon no other account (as you will see more fully anon) but only the pleasure he takes therein.

Joh. I. 18.

Jam. I. 17.

You see, by this time (belov-
ed) a double motive to engage
your attention, to what I have to
say to you on this Text: the
great Authority by which it comes
recommended; and the *great*
Truth

Truth contained in it. Which attention so prepared, I shall employ, by handling it in this method.

1. I shall open the words by a brief *Explication*.
2. Shew you the *Foundations* of *Reason* upon which the great *Doctrine* contained in them stands.
3. Gather some *practical Inferences* from it.

I. In the *Explication* of the Words, I have promised to be brief. And therefore I shall wave the Philosophical Notions in a great measure, which (being in general considered without the coherence in which here they stand) they would afford; as, concerning [The nature, and kinds, and degrees of humane Blessedness; and (that which might in some sort also conduce to our present purpose) the natural tendency of Acts of giving beyond those of receiving to that
blessed-

blessedness naturally considered:] as apprehending, partly, that those notions are not much conducing to your Christian Edification; and partly, that our Saviour, and our Apostle quoting this saying from him, cannot be supposed to intend the instruction of their Hearers in a *Metaphysical Speculation*; but rather, the laying before them and us a *moral direction*, to teach us by what actions in this life men may most contribute to the advancement of their own felicity.

And so the words are a determination of our Saviour upon a supposed Question concerning the comparative Acts of *Giving* and *Receiving* the good things of this Life: to wit [*which of the two doth most truly and most plentifully conduce to man's blessedness?*] In which Determination he casts the scale on the side of *Giving*, (which imports, in general, the doing good to others
in

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in whatever kind or way, and in special, by Acts of Liberality and Bounty;) against *Receiving*, (which, in general, includes whatever way of doing good to a man's self in this life, and in special, by Acts of getting and keeping this World's goods to his own single emolument and advantage) as tending to make him more certainly and cumulatively blessed. For in this sence, it is plain by the Context, this Proverb of our Saviour is here made use of by the Apostle, as an Argument to persuade the Elders of *Ephesus* to *preach the Gospel* to their people in their present state of affairs, *gratis*, and therein to *give* them that temporal reward in to the bargain, which they might (as he elsewhere determines, *viz.* 1 *Cor.* 9. 12.) have challenged of them, together with the Gospel; it being as much a *gift* to forgive a Debt, as to *give* a summ of money out of ones own Purse: which
piece

piece of bountiful self-denial he exhorts them to for this end, that they might (for their more effectual edification) comply with the weakness of their young converts who loved not (as few do) a *chargeable Gospel*; though they were thereby forced in the mean while, as he himself did, to *labour with their own hands* to get a livelihood. And this is that, which in the beginning of this Verse, he calls, [*supporting the weak;*] to induce them whereunto, he quotes this notable saying of our Lord Jesus, to assure them that the inward satisfaction which they would receive from the conscience of having faithfully promoted the salvation of souls by preaching under such disadvantageous circumstances, would be of more worth to them, than the richest temporal Rewards and Revenues they could expect, or might lawfully challenge, for their pains.

So

So that (in summ) you may take the whole sence of the words in this short Paraphrase. Q. d. *I know the World is generally apt to think that the way to Happiness is by getting and possessing abundance of earthly goods. But I tell you from the Lord Jesus, that man provides more truly and effectually for his own blessedness, and promotes it more plentifully, by contributing to the benefiting of others, then by doing good to himself: he is a surer and a greater gainer by giving, then by having; by laying out thus, then by laying up, as the most of the World do; by Bounty and Charity, then by Covetousness and Parsimony.*

II. And this *Paradox* (for such it seems to all Worldlings) thus explained, I am (in the next place) engaged to make good from its proper foundations of *Reason*. For though speaking to an Auditory of professed Christians, as I do, I might very well acquiesce

quiesce in the great Authority of our Saviour, to which we all submit, as a sufficient justification of that which is his own Assertion: Yet, because the greatest divine Truths carry greater Evidence with them when they are proved to be consonant to the common Notions implanted in humane nature; I therefore think it needful to fortifie this Doctrine (abundantly capable of it) with Proofs of that kind also.

And this undertaking I thus endeavour to perform. All the good things which generally (even in the opinion of worldlings) are thought contributory to *felicity*, are either *honourable*, *pleasurable*, or *profitable*: and (if this be granted, which I know none that denies,) I must confess my self much out of the way in the matter of Reason and Argument, if I be not able to make it good, that *Giving* hath more of all these in it, than *Receiving*.

[I. Begin

[1. Begin we therefore with the greater *Honourableness* of Bountiful Actions.

Honour is the real inward esteem that Persons who are meet Judges therein have of any one for things and actions of true worth and excellency. So that, to be truly *Honourable*, is, to be and do that which is *really worthy* and *excellent*; and which is so esteemed to be by the most *competent Judges*.

Whence I have *two things* on this Head to prove.

1. That *Acts of giving* are Acts of more *real worth* and *excellency* than those of *receiving*.
2. That they are, and have always been *so esteemed* by the most *competent Judges*, and such as in this case can rationally be refused by no man.

1.] There is a *real worth* and *excellency* in Acts of *Giving*, beyond those of *Receiving*. Which

is to me evident from *two* main Arguments.

Acts 17.
23.

(1. From the greater conformity, which the *former* bear to the genuine temper and constitution of the Soul of Man. The strength of which Argument lies in this Principle; That where any Nature is acknowledged in it self to be Honourable, (as certainly humane Nature is, being, in the confession of Heathens themselves, *God's offspring* in a special way of Descent; and standing not so many removes from him, as all other sublunary natures do;) there it is most honourable for all that partake of that Nature to act conformably thereunto. Now the humane Soul is certainly a Being endowed with large, generous, and beneficent propensions: so that it cannot without very great uneasiness be confined and cooped up within narrow and selfish Principles. It is strongly inclined to be sociable

able and converse; to be communicative and obliging; to be pitiful and compassionate; all which qualities are of a *giving* nature: and that to such a degree, that the expressions of these inclinations by one man to another, are ordinarily called (as if they only were so, and the contrary propensions were accounted an implicate abrenunciation of humane nature, and an herding ones self with Brutes,) by the name of *Humanity*. Insomuch that our Saviour, when he was to undertake an Office for our benefit, which required compassionate affections, chose to be *made like unto us in all things*, that he might, (by the inclinations of his own assumed humane nature, as well as by the determinations of his Divine Will,) become a *Merci- Heb. 2. 17, full High Priest, and compassionate- 4. 15.* ly touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

Adde we, (for a close of this
C Head)

Head) to this evidence of *Reason*, one or two from *Experience* ; which, where it is constant, is wont to found Maxims and Principles for the use of Reason it self.

The *first* Instance I shall give, shall be in *Friendship*, wherein the soul of man doth most voluntarily fling off all disguises, and appears most delightfully in its proper Naturals to the object of its dearest Affections. Now in such circumstances wherein usually contests of friendship do arise, the great dispute betwixt those Souls that are so linked together, is, whether the one or the other shall exceed in acts of noble and generous bounty : which extends to a pulling down all the Inclosures of *Meum* and *Tuum*, and rendring all things, even life it self, mutually *common*.

The *other* Instance shall be in a *Vice*, which (even in those who at other times use all the Arts they
they

they can to disguise their natures, and keep their breasts shut to all mankind,) is wont to pick the lock of mens bosoms, and, whether they will or no, to expose them to common view: I mean, that of *Dunkenness*. Now in that sinfull excess, among many vicious inclinations (which are various in several men, and which then appear variously,) this one vertuous propension, (which that vice that most transforms men to beasts, cannot eradicate) doth most evidently and almost universally discover it self; insomuch that the most covetous and illiberal Persons in the world are in their *cups* alwayes generously frolick, and free of their Purfes; and those that can worst spare it many times, are yet apt to take it ill that any one in the company offers to pay any part of the reckoning but themselves.

Which I make use of only, as an argument of great force from

common experience, that the purely Natural Temper of the Humane Soul is more inclined to *Giving* than *Receiving*; and (by consequence) that that Propension which is thus naturally implanted in us, renders those Acts which are most conformable to it (*viz.* those of *Giving*,) most *Honourable*. My *first* proof.

2. The *second*, I shall take from the greater agreeableness of Acts of *Giving* to principles of *Justice*, than those of *Receiving*. Which if I can make good, I doubt not of gaining what I intend by it. Now this Notion I thus make out.

God hath originally, by the
 Psal. 115. Law of the Creation, *given the*
 16. *Earth to the Children of men*: that is, hath entituled every man to so much of it, as may yield him a competent and comfortable subsistence. And the propriety that one man hath in this, and another in that proportion of the
 common

common Fathers Bounty, is not set out by him, immediately; but by particular Compacts and Constitutions of men themselves. Which Compacts and Constitutions, though they be sufficient barres, (even upon the obligation of Conscience) to fence mens particular rights against the irruptions of fraud or violence, to alter the possession against the owners will; yet cannot destroy the fundamental Title that any man in want hath to be supplied in his necessities, suitably to his occasions, out of the abundance of other men. Whence it necessarily follows, that there lies an obligation of Justice upon the abounding possessor of this worlds goods, in all such cases, (as indeed in all other, wherein any of those uses are concerned, which God and Nature have made necessary for the support of common Humanity in the several generations of the World) to quit

his propriety so far, by his own consent, as may suffice for the relief of his *Brethren*, and the satisfying of those uses, (whatever they be,) without which mankinde cannot be preserved or maintained as it ought to be.

Which is the Reason, in likelihood, why the abundance of any mans Riches is called by our Saviour, τὸ ἀλλοτρίον, *that which is anothers*, (i. e. anothers with him, and not entirely his own :) so that no man can justly say of his worldly Estate, as *Nabal* did, and in his sense, [*My bread, and my water, and my flesh, &c.*] as if no creature had any share therein but himself. For indeed, (besides that all we have, even whiles we have it, is (in reference to *God*) not *ours*; for he loseth not his Supreme Right and Propriety of Dominion by any of his bounties :) a greater part of most mens Estates than usually they imagine, is by the Original Divine Law that

Luk. 16.

12.

1 Sam. 25.

11.

that I told you of before, not entirely their *own*, even with reference to their *brethren* in humanity; but they, in several capacities, may justly challenge considerable shares therein, which cannot with Justice be denied them. And particularly, in the case of Charity (which I specially here drive at,) *Almes* is therefore frequently called *Justice* or *Righteousness*, and he that gives them, a *Just* or *Righteous* man, in the usual Hebrew Idiom throughout the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*, and some say, in the *New* Mat. 6. 1. also in some places of special note, 2 Cor. 9. 10, &c. which I will not now insist on. And he that denyes or delays his relief, in his *Brothers* needs, is said (by *Solomon*) to *withhold* Prov. 3. *good from those to whom it is due,* ^{27.} or (as the Margin reads it) *from the Owners thereof.* So that (Justice, which is the foundation of all moral vertues, being on that account Honourable, and Bounty

an Act of Justice; and tenaciousness or sordid parsimony, on the contrary, of injustice;) it is evident, that that *act* which bears most conformity to Justice, must be more Honourable than that which for a great part is, and more commonly is suspected to be, of Confederacy with Injustice: *i. e. Giving, then Receiving.*

2.] And lest any person should seek protection from the dishonourable Reflexions this Doctrine makes upon his sordidness; by alledging, that this Judgement, concerning the real excellency of acts of *Giving* above *Receiving*, is not made by *competent Judges*; I shall (in the next place) shew you who they are on whose determinations I rely, for the justifying this Assertion: who (I am bold to assert) are not to be refused (by any person who owns himself a *Creature*, a *Man*, or a *Christian*,) as the most meet to determine in this matter.

(1. The

(1. The first Judge to whom I appeal in this cause, is God himself, who must needs be owned by every Creature, as the Supreme Judge in a Court of Honour; being the most excellent of Beings, and the Fountain of all that is honourable. Now God, besides what he hath declared in his written word, which tells us that the *horn* of him that *disperseth and giveth* Psal. 112. 9. *to the poor shall be exalted*, (a Metaphor taken from those ruling Beasts in the Herd that carry their *horns* higher than the rest, with a kinde of glorying, and confidence,) *with honour*: I say, besides what his Word, (in that and other places) declares expressly; God doth most evidently pronounce his *Judgement* in this matter, by his own actions; who, (renouncing the capacity of receiving from any other Being, as a *disparagement*,) takes it for his *honour* to be and to be owned as the universal *Giver*, that
gives

A&T. 17. gives to all life and breath and all things: and argues, (with some kinde of exprobration) the unworthiness of those mens thoughts concerning him, that conceit any man can *give* any thing to him; from the *precedency* and causality of his Bounty to all that capacity we can pretend to, to do any thing to oblige him withall, seeing that *of him and through him* are all things.

Rom. 11. 35, 37.

(2. Nor can the Lord Jesus be refused as a *competent Judge* in this matter, by any that owns the Name of *Christian*, and acknowledgeth the highest Honours of the whole Creation to be due to him; who is *worshipped by all the Angels of God*, and *hath a Name above every Name*, a Name to which every knee must bow, &c. Now it must needs be yielded by any rational man, that (had he not, as he hath, verbally declared his Judgement in this particular of *Blessedness* as well

Heb. 1. 6. Phil. 2. 10.

well in many other Scriptures, as in the Text, yet) he hath sufficiently by his deeds proclaimed that to be the most *worthy* and *honourable* action, by the constant exercise whereof he procured his *own Honours*; emptying himself that he might *fill us*: and becoming poor for our sakes that we *Phil. 2.7.*
through his poverty might be rich; *2 Cor. 8.9.*
 and in the prospect whereof, he quitted the *natural Honour* of being *equal to his Father*, to assume an office wherein he was to be his *Inferiour*, that he might thereby acquire the *peculiar Honour* of being our *Redeemer*. Now it is evident, that the whole work of our Redemption consisted of acts of *Giving*, not *Receiving*.

(3. However, as *Men*, it is to be hoped that none that owns himself of that number, will in this matter refuse the *Judgement of all mankind*. Which *Judgement* may be evidently gathered,

(1.) From

(1.) From the respect and Duty which (all the world over) superiour Relations expect and receive from their Inferiours, which in humanity are equal to themselves: whereof, if we enquire the Reason, there can be no other given (antecedent to Divine or Humane Laws, which yet are founded upon antecedent Reason) than this; that they are, or else are supposed to be, the Authors of such and such benefits (either of Being, or conducing to well-being) which those Inferiours receive from them, or enjoy under them.

(2.) From the Testimonies of Gratitude, which are every where and in all Ages given to those who are eminently beneficial to Mankind, or to particular Societies of men. Wherein, there could never be so universal a consent, but from the concurrence of all mens Judgements in this Principle, that *to do good, is more noble than to receive.* Now

Now this is evident, (in matter of fact) from all Histories. The old Heathens thought they could not honour such Instruments sufficiently with any humane Honours; and therefore they deified, (as far as in them lay, by Temples, and Altars, and Sacrifices, &c.) the Inventours of usefull Arts and Sciences; the Founders of Kingdoms and Empires; the Authours of publick Constitutions and Laws; and the great and noted Champions and defenders, or Saviours and deliverers, of any Communities of men from great and publick calamities.

Yea, they bestowed like Honours, upon the Heavenly Bodies, and Earthly Elements. The Sun and the Moon, and divers of the noted Stars: yea the Earth it self, and the Sea that encompasseth it, the Fire and the Aire, and Rivers and Springs; (and whatever else contributed to the support of man;) were either reputed Gods
them-

themselves, or the special reficiencies of some Deities, who by them communicated their particular Bounties to mankind.

And where these Heathen Idolatries have been exploded, yet even there, men have generally thought such persons worthy the highest Acknowledgements that Humane Nature was capable of. Which they have expressed in Pannegyricks and Poems, in Statues and other magnificent Structures, in Coyns and other publick Inscriptions, (and whatever other lasting Monuments they could devise;) to render them, as to their Names and Memories (who could not be in their Bodies) immortal.

Let now, (for a close of this Head) the sordid self-ended sort of men, shew us any Instances, if they can, of like Honours done to those who (without doing good to any but themselves) have spent their Time in *finding riches*

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as a nest, and gathering them like Isa. 10. 14.
eggs, to sit on. Yea, rather, let the experience of all Ages speak, and it will tell us, that there are no sort of men in the world, whom the generality of Mankind have treated with more curses and bitter scoffs whiles they lived; or hissed off the stage of this life with more open reproach and infamy when they died. So that I hope, I have sufficiently demonstrated, that (whether we respect the nature of the Acts themselves, or the concurrent Judgement of God and Man,) it is more honourable by far to give than to receive.

[2. The Pleasure which accreues to men from Acts of Bounty, doth no less exceed that which ariseth from those of Covetousness and Parsimony.

Of which there needs no farther evidence (in Reason) than what I before intimated upon the former Head; viz. [the greater agreeable-

agreeableness of such actions to the *native largeness* and *generosity* of the *soul* of man, and the *Principles of Universal Justice* :] There being no such satisfactory pleasure in the world attainable by Humane Nature, as is the inward content which a vertuous man takes in reflecting upon those things which he hath done with the approbation of his own Reason and Conscience ; and no greater grief, than when they complain that they are violenced and oppressed by unnatural and unreasonable Lusts and Passions.

But to make this also more evident by particular Instances.

(1. It is an undeniable Argument of the Pleasure that *Giving* yields beyond *Receiving*, that God, whose infinite Perfection placeth him beyond all capacity of *Receiving* (as was said before) can be supposed to have no other motive to *Give*, as he doth continually,

tinually, but the inward satisfaction he findes in Beneficence it self. Whence some tell us, that his Name, *El-shaddai*, hath the Notion of a *full breast* in it, to which nothing can be so pleasurable as to vent it self into the mouth of the sucking Infant: which is pained with its own fulness, and findes its only ease in being emptied. And indeed, the complacency that he is said to have taken in all the works of his Creation, when he had finished them, implied in that so often repeated Phrase, *God saw that it was good*; the readiness that is in him to *satisfie the desires of every living thing*; the constant unweariedness of his Bounty (the greatest evidence of the pleasure taken in any action) *continually filling the earth with his riches*; the invitations he so frequently gives to men to *call upon him, opening the mouths of their holy desires wide that he may fill them*,

Gen. 1. 10,

12, 18, 21,

23, 31.

Psal. 145.

16.

Psal. 104.

24.

Pf. 50. 15.

Pf. 81. 10.

D

and

Phil. 4. 6. and in all things making their requests known to him; with the
Prov. 15. 8. delight he professeth to take in the prayers of good men, which invite his Bounties: sufficiently argue the divine pleasure that is in giving; being the satisfaction which God himself chooseth for himself. And to be sure, be the pleasure of receiving what it will, it cannot pretend to so high an Original.

(2. The like may (secondly) be argued from the example of our Lord Jesus, who seems by his actions to have preferred the
Isa. 53. 10. pleasure of seeing his spiritual seed,
Heb. 2. 10. and bringing many sons to glory,
5. 9. by being the Author and Captain of their Salvation; before the infinite satisfactions and delights of
Pro. 8. 30. his Fathers Bosom, wherein he rejoyced alwayes before him from all eternity: and that so far, that he deprived himself (in a sort) of the very pleasures of Divinity for a Time, by becoming Man,
 that

that he might be the Redeemer and Saviour of Mankind.

The very *prospect* of this great work cheered his heart before he undertook it, he *rejoyced in the* Pro. 8.31. *habitable part of Gods Earth, and his delights were with the Sons of men*; when he entred upon that *Body* the Father had prepared for him, though he knew he was to make it a *sacrifice*, yet he did it (as he professeth) with *delight to* Heb. 10. 5, 7. *do his Fathers will* therein; he spent all his Time on Earth in *going about and doing good gratis*, Acs 10. 38. to those miserable Creatures that could not any way requite him; did divers of his great works in Joh. 7.4,5. silence and privacy, and forbad the publication of them; and re- Luk. 5.14. 8. 56. fused the Honours that men offered him for those that were of too publick benefit to be concealed; and when he knew that his dolefull *Hour was come*, how did he complain the minutes moved slowly, till he had opportunity D 2 offered

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Luk. 12. 50. offered to accomplish that *bloody Baptisme*, that he foretold he was to be *baptized withall*? His Cross
Col. 2. 15. on which he suffered, he is said to *triumph* upon, as a Conquerour in a Chariot of State. And (after his Death,) his Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven again, he
Heb. 12. 2. looked on as a *Joy set before him*; not surely *on his own account* only, but because he also knew
Joh. 14. 2. he was going to *prepare Mansions* for us, as our *Harbinger*, to lead us the way into the *Holy Place*, as
Heb. 6. 20. our *forerunner*, and to lie as our *Lieger* there to do us good Offices by his *intercession* till he had
7. 25. *saved us to the utmost*. So that our Saviours *Practice* is a full and further evidence of the *Pleasure* that is in *Giving* more than *Receiving*.

(3. Gods holy Angels, as (of all Creatures) they nearest approach to the Divine Nature, so herein they proportionably imitate his perfections; that (like him)

him) they are continually employed in doing good upon the like motives of the delight and satisfaction they finde therein. For continuing in the state of felicity wherein they were at first created, they must be supposed to be above any need of *receiving* any reall addition to the happiness which the continual *standing in Gods presence* affords them; and yet, with what cheerfulness and alacrity do they *doe the will of* Heb. i. 14. God, even in those *low Ministeries* whereunto they stoop to serve our occasions? They *keep us in all our wayes*, and that with as much carefulness, as the Nurse doth the tender Infant, *bearing us* Ps. 91. 11; *up in their hands*, that we *dash* 12. *not so much as our foot against a stone*; they *pitch their tents*, as a Pl. 34. 7. constant life-guard, about good men; (yea, an whole Army of 2 Kings 6. 17. them, sometimes, about one Saint) for their security; they *fight* for us against evil Spirits, under the Apoc. 12. 7.

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Captain of our Salvation ; they
 Dan. 9. 21. *fly swiftly*, as our Intelligencers,
 on good errands, to comfort us ;
 and these, and all other good
 offices, they are ready to do on
 all occasions, for the least and
 meanest of Mankind (even those
 Isa. 58. 7.
 Mat. 18.
 10. whom we, who are their *own flesh*,
 are apt to *despise*) while they *live* ;
 and when they *die*, think it not
 beneath them to take up their
 Souls into their blessed Arms, and
 carry them to their habitation of
blisse and glory. All which offi-
 ces they would never descend to
 do with so much unwearied ala-
 crity, if they found not the do-
 ing of them pleasurable: for if
 they disgusted them in any sort,
 as burdensome and uncomforta-
 ble employments ; it must needs
 imply, that all the while they are
 so employed, their *perfect holiness*
 must suffer a diminution, and their
perfect happiness an eclipse.

(4. But all these Instances, it
 may be objected, are *above* us,
 and

and so not imitable by us : nor are our pleasures to be measured by theirs. Let us therefore (in the *next* place) make triall, whether , even *men of like passions with our selves* , have not been wont to finde the same satisfaction in *giving* ; and for that reason preferred it before *receiving*.

(1.) Look we first, on the Christian part of Mankind. And, whatever we may observe in the later Ages and very dreggs of Christianity, wherein Religion is even swallowed up and devoured by Interest all the world over ; yet I am sure, *from the beginning it was not so*. Those first Disciples of our Master Christ took the greatest delight in copying out the great examples of his Generosity and Bounty : They sold (some of them) considerable Estates, and gave in the *price of them* to the common stock, to supply the necessary charges of

the first Plantation of Christianity. *Acts* 4. 34. to the end. They carried about the great and *unsearchable riches of Christ*, and scattered the *savour of his knowledge with triumph in every place* freely: and when they might, refused to *receive* any thing from those to whom they gave so much, and would not be stopped of this *glorying*, nor suffer it to be *made voyd*: accounting it the very *reward* of their work to do it *without reward*; and render the Gospel *without charge*.

2 Cor. 2.
14.

1 Cor. 9.
15.

V. 18.

2 Cor. 12.
10.

And the great hardships and hazards that they underwent, in the Discharge of this Duty so infinitely beneficial to Mankind, they did undergoe with the greatest delight and inward satisfaction. *I take pleasure* (saith our Apostle) *in infirmities*, (i. e. of suffering) *in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake*: which abundantly shews what *pleasure* that work

work yielded, that made all those necessary difficulties *pleasurable*, which were then to be encountered for its sake. For, however they that underwent these things had by Faith a prospect of a *future great reward*, which contributed very much to their present Comfort ; yet, even that argues sufficiently the verity of our Hypothesis, that in that condition wherein they were not in any temporal respect *receivers*, nor capable of being so, they found such over-ballancing pleasures in the nature and consequences of their very work, as weighed down all the discouraging Circumstances in which they were by Providence engaged.

(2.) But, to be sure, whatever future hopes *Christians* had to encourage them in well doing with delight : the *Heathens* had none such ; for the Apostle tells us, they were *without hope* (*i. e.* ^{Eph. 2 12.} ^{1 Thess. 4.} such as is grounded and certain,) ^{13.}
of

of these felicities of another world. And yet even divers of them, have found a kinde of intellectual Epicurisme (if I may so say) in the very acts of Beneficence. Of which it is a notable Instance which *Xenophon* gives us in the character of his Heroe, of whom he tells us most divinely, that διδ' ὧς μᾶλλον ἢ κτῶμενος ἡδίστου, *he had a greater delight in what he gave than in what he possessed.* And on the other side, it is a great Instance of the self-displeasure of a vertuous man, when he hath missed the opportunity of doing good in this kinde; that the good Emperour *Titus* was wont to complain he had *lost that day*, which he had spent without doing some body a good Turn; than which, nothing can more strongly argue the pleasure he found in every *other Day* wherein he had been so employed.

(3.) Lastly, look we on *Mankind indefinitely*, and we shall finde,

finde, that all persons (whether Christians or Heathens) own a great Pleasure in *giving* or *doing* good to others, beyond the proportion of what *receiving* or *doing* good to themselves yields. For whence is it else, that the carefull Nurse delightfully suffers her body to be drained of the best nourishment it receives, in suckling her Infant ; that she undergoes with singing so many nauseous drudgeries for him ; and disquiets her self with so many restless and wakefull nights to breed him ; from whom for divers months she can expect no other present return than a few smiles now and then, when she can get him in a good humour ; and whose future qualities or condition she cannot foresee so as to expect any certain future requital from him ? Whence is it, that every one generally loves the creature of his own Bountty, and studies to oblige him more, to
whom

whom he hath formerly been wonted to shew special kindnesse? And yet this many times is done to those that have nothing of real worth to deserve, nor ever arrive at proportionable capacities to requite them. Certainly, the most obvious Reason of these actions, that occurs to a considering man, must be (that that I am discoursing of,) that to all rational Beings there is a *pleasure* that accompanies *giving* or Beneficence in any kinde; which is more generous and refined than any that comes in by *receiving*.

(5. Lastly, it seems not altogether unworthy to be taken notice of upon this Head, that the Scripture (in conformity with this Notion of *the pleasure of Giving*, and probably the more to commend it to us to make an experiment in our selves) expresseth the inanimate Creatures themselves as Instances of rejoicing

joycing in acts of beneficence to Mankind.

For thus the *outgoings of the* Ps. 65. 8;
Morning and Evening are said to
rejoyce, when in their constant vi-
 cissitudes they refresh us: thus
 the *Sun*, when he ariseth to en-
 lighten the world, is described
 as a *Bridegroom coming out of his* Ps. 19. 5;
Chamber, and a *Giant rejoycing to*
run his race: thus, in *Jothams*
Parable, the *Olive*, and the *Vine*,
 and the *Fig-tree*, are represented
 as unwilling to forgoe the plea-
 sures of bearing sweet fruit to fur-
 nish *divine Sacrifices*, and *humane*
Treatments, to obtain a *Monarchy* Judg. 9. 9;
among the Trees: and thus, lastly, 11, 13.
 the *Pastures*, when they are co-
 vered with *Grass*, and *Flocks* to Pl. 65. 13.
 crop it, and the *Valleys*, when
 laden with *Corn* to be reaped by
 us, are said to *shout* and sing for
 joy. As, on the other side, the
Heavens are said to be *black* with Jer. 4. 28.
 grief, and the *Earth* to *mourn*, and 12. 4.
 the *Vine* to *languish* (as it were) Il. 24. 4, 7.
 with 33. 9.

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with sorrow; when in a barren year their wonted fertility is restrained.

In summe therefore, (to close up this head too) whether we take measure of the delight and pleasantness that is in Acts of *Giving* beyond *Receiving*; either from *God* or *Christ*, or good *Angels*, or *Christians*, or *Heathens*, or *inanimate Creatures* themselves, (which distribution takes in almost all Beings but Devils, whose delight, indeed, is only in doing mischief:) we finde, that the felicity that accrews from *Pleasure*, is greater from *giving* than *receiving*.

[3. The *third* and *last* thing that contributes to *blessedness* is *Profit*. And my next business is to shew, that in that respect also *Giving* hath the advantage of *Receiving*, as being of the two the more *profitable*.

And so it is both in reference to the Benefit that thereby is attained

tained in *this World*, and in that which *is to come*.

(1. In reference to *this World*, There is a threefold Concern to be regarded, wherein the advantage I speak of evidently appears,

1. In Life.
2. In Sicknes and Death.
3. After Death.

1.) In *Life*, (this Life, where- Ps. 17. 12. in the Worldlings *portion* principally lies) mans portion of this Worlds good things is by acts of *Bounty*,

1. Best Secured,
2. Most Comfortably enjoy'd,
3. Most plentifully Improved.

(1.) This Portion is hereby *best secured*. Infomuch, that no Deeds or Evidences, or Bonds or Mortgages, or Baggs or Chests, or Walls or Forts, or Locks or Barres, or Bolts or Guards, afford us like Security for what we have; as *charitable Giving* bestows upon us. And that, not only in reference

- rence to a *Security of Equivalency*, (in which notion *St. Ambrose* handsomly Rhetoricates with the rich man in the Gospel, who was
- Lu. 12. 18.** *sollicitous to pull down his old Barns, as not big enough to receive his increase, and build bigger; when he tells him, that the course he took was the way to pull down rather than to build; and addes, that he will direct him to a better course to secure and lay up his Goods, by making the houses of the Widows, the Stomachs of the Poor, and the Mouths of the Orphans his Barns and Granaries; And our Saviour before*
- Mat. 6. 19.** *him, when he tells us of laying up our Treasure (by laying it out,) where rust or moth doth not corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through and steal; and to*
- Lu. 12. 33.** *put our money into baggs that will not wax old, &c:) but also in reference to that temporal Security in kinde, which the worldling most looks after, in whose*
Heart

Heart as well as in his Deeds [to have and to hold] is the clause of principal respect and esteem. Let us see therefore, how even this Security may be chiefly attained by *Giving*. And here, (besides the rational conducibleness of the Principles of Generosity and Bounty to the preservation of mens temporal Estates, from the *general Friendship* which such a Temper procures a man, whiles every *mouth* is open for him, every *hand* is ready to be lifted up in his defence, and every mans *Power* and *Interest* is engaged to preserve him as a publick benefit; and the very worst of men, that are wont *vivere rapto*, to live by cheating and robbery, have a great awe of injuring such an one, as judging such a Crime to be of a guilt little inferiour to Sacrilege:) I say besides this rational Security, the munificent man hath the far greater Religious Security of divers Promises.

E

of

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of Divine Protection. If thou deal thy bread to the hungry, (saith the Prophet *Isaiah*,) and satisfy the afflicted soul; if thou bring the poor that are cast out of their own, to thy house, and when thou seest the naked thou cover him, and hide not thy self from thine own flesh, i. e. any one that is partaker of common humanity with thy self, &c: then shall thy righteousness goe before thee, as thy Avantguard, and the glory of the Lord (as the presence of God to the Israelites in their march out of Egypt) shall be thy Reward. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, into wayes of safety and security, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and like a Spring whose waters fail not, when publick calamities destroy the estates of others, as the scorching Sun doth the fruits of the earth in a dry season.

Isa. 58. 7, 8,
9, 10, 11.

Which

Which *Promise* is the same in substance (abating the high Metaphors) with what (in plainer and more intelligible words, according to the Language of those Times) we finde elsewhere thus expressed ; that the *righteousness of him* that is bountifull, *shall endure for ever*, i. e. he shall never be other, than a *giver*, he shall alwayes have wherewithall to *give*, and *wealth and riches shall* ^{Psal. 112.} (as constant inhabitants) *be in* ^{3, 9.} *his house*. I could heap up many places of Scripture more to the same purpose. That of the Prophet before mentioned, that *by* ^{Isa. 32. 8.} *liberal things the liberal man shall stand*, when others fall to decay. That of the same Prophet, that *he that walketh righteously*, (of ^{33. 16, 17.} which righteous walking Almes-giving (as I told you before) is a part) *shall dwell on high*, (the proper situation for strength,) *his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks*, (not to be stormed

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or undermined,) *bread shall be*
given him, and his waters shall be
sure; so as not to be starved or
furnished out of his fortification,
placed in the Divine Protection,
&c. But I forbear, that I be
not too tedious in so copious an
Argument.

In a word, by this means that
Quicksilver-wealth, that is so
volatile, that ordinarily it *makes*
Pro. 23.5. *it self wings to fly away*, (by offer-
ing Temptations to the owner to
waste it in riots and debauches,
or to the Robber to take it
away by fraud and violence) is
fixed and kept constant to its
1 Tim. 6. Possessor : and *uncertain riches*
17. (as the Apostle calls them,) being
joyn'd with *wisdom and righte-*
Pro. 8.16. *ousness*, (true *Godliness* and *Alms*,)
become *durable* and abiding.

Whereas, on the contrary, the
withholding what is meet from
the good uses wherein Provi-
dence calls for it, *tendeth to Po-*
Prev. 11. *verty*; i. e. is the ready way to
24. *undoe*

undoe a man even in this world. For, (as constant Experience shewes) *most men* are wont to make little Conscience, (when they have ability and opportunity to do it,) of getting what they can from such an one as is noted to be sordidly tenacious ; every one contributing either his wishes or his help to the pillaging of him : and *Gods Curse* also seconds such attempts (though unjust, as from men, justly,) *blowing* Hag. 1. 9, *upon* such Estates, till he hath *blown them away* (as your Margin in the place quoted reads it) which a sordid Parsimony scrapes together, and holds fast by humane contrivance and endeavour. Thus you see the *Security* that *Giving* yields to our present enjoyments, beyond *Receiving*.

(2.) This *Portion* is rendred more *comfortable* to us in the *use* of it, by *Giving*, than by *Receiving*. And this from a twofold cause.

1. From the *satisfaction* that a *bountifull giver* hath in his own Conscience, that he spends out of that Estate which is clearly and entirely his *own* : a satisfaction, which (how good a Title soever one hath as to *men*) no person can have, as to *God*, but he. For whereas all our Estates are held of God as their Supreme Lord, (and that, under such and such charges and Duties to issue out of them to pious and charitable uses;) it follows, that except those uses be first duely satisfied, we have just reason to fear a forfeiture, and thereupon to question our legal Title, *in foro Dei*, to the remainder. For, by taking from that Lump or Heap from which Gods portion is not separated, we are in continual hazard of *devouring that which is holy*, together with that which is our own propriety ; *i. e.* of committing Sacriledge, which of all sins doth most forfeit our selves and

Prov. 20.
25.

and what we have to Gods Exchequer. Whereas, on the contrary, the *liberal Person* that bountifully dischargeth all these Payments, is free from that scruple. For, as the *paying of First-fruits*, Dent. 26. 11. under the Law, unto God, discharged the remainder of each years profits, to be freely and comfortably made use of by the Owner: so doth *Almes*, under the Gospel, given proportionably to *what we possess*, (as our Saviour tells the Pharisees) Lu. 11. 41. make our whole Estates, in point of Conscientious use, *clean unto us*.

2. From the true *comfortable relish* of the natural good which the Creatures afford with Gods blessing; which the *sordid Receiver* never tastes so sweetly as the *bountifull Giver*. For (besides that the great gatherers of worldly riches do many times through sordid penuriousness, deny themselves, as well as all others, the enjoyment of what they have,

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Eccles. 8. and have not the heart to eat
2. thereof;) it often falls out that

cares and *fears* and other uncomfortable Passions which such men are subject unto, when they do

Ps. 102. 9. *eat, make their bread to them like*

Prov. 20. *ashes, and fill their mouths with*
17. *gravell,* as the Scripture phraseth

the uncomfortable use of those

Creatures to some that are the comfortable food of other men.

So that the *bountifull man*, whose generosity sets him above those

vexing distempers, enjoys more

of the Creature it self in far meaner accommodations, than he that

hath the good things of the world in the greatest affluence, with the

fordid attendance of those disquieting Passions that are wont

to wait on penurious parsimony and *covetousness*. So that a little

Ps. 37. 16. (if it be but a little) *that a righteous*

(i.e. the charitable) *man hath,* is in this respect better than the

riches of many such wicked: And if, (for so it often falls out, as
will

will by and by appear more fully) the *Blessing of God* upon bountifull givers *make* them really rich; he makes them herein (withall) richer than all others of equal or greater Estates, that he *addes no sorrow with it.*

Prov. 10.
22.

(3.) But the greatest advantage of all, (in reference to his *Portion in this life*) accrewing to the *generous and religious Giver*, is that which the worldly man most looks after, [*Improvement and Increase*;] which (even in mens Temporal Estates) is acquired also by *Bounty* rather than by *Covetousness* and *Parsimony*. For indeed, though such persons as give liberally, are ordinarily said to be *too free to be fat*; and the more a man takes from the heap, (in humane judgement,) he makes it so much the less: yet herein we often judge by false Measures, and might, if we duely weighed things, finde our selves as often confuted by Experience
it

Prov. 11.
24, 25.

it self. For it is from thence, that those speeches of *Solomon* got the reputation of Proverbs, that *there is that* thus *scattereth and yet increaseth*; and that *the liberal soul*, though *free*, becomes *fat* (to cross the former *same*,) and he that *watereth* others, is *watered* (plentifully with Gods benediction in the same kinde) *himself*.

2 Cor. 9.
8, 9, 10.

Whence it is, that *Giving*, in the Scripture, is frequently compared to *sowing*, wherein the *seed* doth not (as one saith) *perire*, but *parturire*; it is not lost, but impregnated by the Soyl on which it falls, and made fruitfull; God *increasing* to bountifull givers *the fruits of their righteousness* (i.e. the Estates which their Almes doe scatter;) and *making all Grace*, (that is, all sorts of effects of his own Bounty,) towards such *to abound*; and *giving them all sufficiency in all things*; and even those (among the rest) of which they seem, by bestowing so much
on

on others, to endanger the not leaving what is sufficient for themselves.

So that (as an ancient Writer tells us,) *the breasts of Charity the more they are sucked, breed the more milk*; the Woman of *Sarepta's* Barrel and *Cruse* have no bottom, whiles she is charitable to Gods Prophet; and the Miracle of our Saviour, (in a sort) is daily acted over and over, whiles, as in his, so in the bountifull donours hands, the *loaves* as they are distributed, multiply.

1 Kings
17. 16.

Matth. 14.
19, 20.
15. 36, 37.

Very ingenious, to this purpose, is the comparison that one makes betwixt the Expences that men are at to maintain their Lusts, and those that they charge themselves withall to charitable Uses; to the *eating* a Field of Corn in the blade, (as is usual when it is rank,) by *Horses* and *Sheep*. The teeth of Lusts in an Estate, though never so great, are like (sayes he)

to

to those of Horses in such a Field, that tear up the Corn by the roots; but those of the poor, like the teeth of Sheep, that by cropping it moderately make it spread and increase.

And the story *Melancthon* (as I find him quoted) tells us of a certain good Bishop, is very proper to this purpose. The good man upon a journey being compassed about by a crowd of poor people (who, knowing his charitable minde, begged his Almes) commands his servant that managed his expences, to give them *three Crowns*, which fell out then to be all he had in Purse. The servant (considering the many occasions that in travelling fall out) thought it good husbandry in his present circumstances, to curtail the Charity of his Master, and save *one* of the *three*; withall, telling his Master how thrifty he had been for him. They had not travelled much further, when certain great
 Persona-

Personages meeting them, and knowing formerly the Bishops bountifull disposition, gave the same Servant for his Masters use 200 *Crowns*. Which Bounty when his Master understood, he presently expressed his displeasure thus to his Servant for his former unseasonable Providence. Thou (saith he) hast clearly lost me an *hundred Crowns*. For thou gavest the Poor but two Crowns when I bade thee give three: and now God hath sent me but two hundred: *si autem tres dedisses, trecentos accepisses*, if thou hadst given the third Crown too, these two hundred had been three.

Be the credit of the story with the Author or Relater: but I am sure, the *Moral* of it, (if it be a *fable*,) is good, and fully to our present purpose; to shew how mans Bounty engageth God's; and we never lose more, than by what we think we save from pious

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ous and charitable Uses to adde to our own Estates.

And the Reason upon which this great Truth is bottomed, is this; that (as *Solomon* tells us)
Prov. 19. *he that hath pity upon the Poor*
17. *doth, (in the rendring of the*

Vulgar out of the 72.) Domino
fœnerari; he lends upon usury to
the Lord, who is the best Credi-
tor, and sure in such cases to re-
pay the Principal Money with
ample Interest; even to an hun-
Mat. 19. *dred fold in this life (as his pro-*
29. *mise runs, verified in the former*
story) besides the Interest upon
Interest, accumulated, in life ever-
lasting.

Whereas, on the other side, the boording receiver (as *St. Ambrose* again tells the Rich man in the Gospel) *nescit struere divitias*, is indeed ignorant of the true Art of thriving which he professeth ; for he takes the wrong way to Riches, whiles he deals only with men that may break,
(by

(by a thousand accidents, as well as, which too often falls out, through a dishonest Design;) and so often loseth the Interest with the Principal; and refuseth to trust God for his **Creditor**, who *John* can never fail by casualty, and (to be sure) never will by deceitfulness, and couzenage.

And thus have you seen, by what I have said, that (even in *this Life*) the Concerns of the *Giver* (as to point of *Profit*) are in a better Condition every way, than those of the *Receiver*. And they are no less so

2.) In *Sickness and Death*. For whereas the *sordid Receiver* usually hath a dolefull and uncomfortable Time of it, and receives the *sentence of death in himself* with a great deal of horror; whiles (partly) the omission of the good that was *in the power of his hand* to have done, pursues him with guilt, and (partly) the consideration that he and his beloved

Mammon

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Mammon must now eternally
 part company, and nothing of all
 that he enjoyed can *descend into*
 Pl. 49. 17. *the grave after him*, afflicts him
 with grief, and (partly) the settle-
 ment of what he hath unconscio-
 nably gathered distracts him with
 cares, and (lastly) the uncertain-
 tie of his Eternal Estate, which
 he hath formerly neglected, op-
 presseth him with just and deser-
 ved fears: the *bountiful Giver*,
 (if, at least, he hath managed his
 Charities with Religious Princi-
 ples) either hath, or hath cause
 to have, an easie and peaceable
 Passage out of this world, a true
 εὐδαιμονία, in all respects. Whiles
 he is assured by Gods Promise,
 Psal. 41. 3. that *he will strengthen him upon*
his bed of languishing, and make
all his bed in his sickness: whiles
 the leaving his earthly goods lies
 not near his heart, having con-
 tinually kept the cares of keeping
 them at a distance from it; and
 the Conscience of his good deeds
 in

in this world, and the comfortable assurance of the Friendships he hath made in another world, dismiss him hence with that applause, which the vain Emperour *Augustus* once fondly called for of those *apud Sum-* friends which assisted him in his *monium.* last Agonies.

3.) *After Death*: whereas there are are *two things* (in reference still to this world) which commonly men when they come to die are concerned for, (their *Memory*, and their *Posterity*;) both these also are secured to the *bountifull Giver*.

(1.) His *Memory*, which *Solomon* tells us is *better than precious oylment*, (to embalm and keep Men from putrefaction when they are dead :) the same holy Author tells us, shall be *blessed*. All men *Eccles. 7. 12.* will speak of such an one with just commendations, and bury his Infirmities in his Grave, as thinking themselves obliged to have his good deeds only *in everlasting* *Pro. 16. 7.*

F

remem-

66 *The blessedness of being bountiful.*

remembrance. The good woman that spent her *Box of precious oyntment* upon our *Saviours feet*, received from him another *oyntment* far more *precious*; in the assurance he gave her, that *wherever that Gospel should be preached in the world, that good deed should be told in memorial of her.*

Mat. 26.
13.

But of the *tenacious Receiver* (whom in opposition to the liberally *righteous* the wise man calls *the wicked*) he sayes withall, that his *memory shall rot*, i. e. not only perish, but also stink and be offensive whiles it is perishing, in the nostrils of Posterity: and though he take as great care as *Absalom* did in his *life-time*, to raise himself the most magnificent Monuments to preserve his Name, when he is dead, yet they shall serve only (as they say his Pillar doth) to invite Survivors to cast stones at, in detestation of his Memory.

Prov. 16.
7. *supra*.

2 Sam. 18.
18.

(2.) His *Posterity*, and remain-
ing

ing Relations enjoy an entayled *Blessing* on the Estate which the liberal man leaves behinde him; and that in the largest extent that can rationally be desired. And no wonder : For by his *Charity* he hath engaged God to be the *Executor* of his *Will*, the *Husband* of his *Widow*, and the *Guardian* to his *Fatherless Children*. And under his Tuition (the Psalmist assures us, both by Promise, and answerable Experience to back it) they shall be well looked to. For (saith he) the man who is *mercifull and lendeth*, (sometimes *Psalm. 37.* lending is as true a *Charity* as *25, 26.* giving) *his seed shall be blessed*. And he makes it good by an Experimental Observation of his own; *I have been young and now am old, but I never saw the charitably righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.*

Whereas, the *Posterity* of the *sordid Receiver* have no such provision made for them, but (as to

any Divine Promise) are left to the wide world, without any assurance of being thus cared for by him. So that (however they fare, when the Parent is gone, upon the account either of common Providence, or (if they prove better than their Ancestor) by Divine Benediction as the reward of their personal Piety ; yet) the comfort hereof can no way lighten the cares and fears of his dying Bed : because he hath no warrant to expect any better event to befall them, than the Prophetical Curse bestowed upon

*Pfal. 109. Judas, to be continually Vagabonds
10, 11, 12, and begge, &c. And Experience
13, 14, 15. too often proves that Curse to
extend farther than the Person it
was principally meant for ; even
to the Children of all those who
(like him) remembred not to shew
mercy. It being a thing of com-
mon observation, that the more
the covetous Father leaves his
Posterity, the more certain Prey
they*

they become to as covetous Tutors and Guardians; or, if they escape them, are (too often) worse handled by their own prodigal Lusts; which (before the third Generation) *scatter all that with the forke*, which the carefull Predecessor *gathered with the Rake*. So that frequently within one mans Memory a great Estate, in one and the same Family, is both gotten and spent; and spent in fewer moneths it may be than it was years in getting. It is an handsome Memento that one of the Ancients (before mentioned) gives the sordid gatherer: Thou takest care, saith he, to oblige thy Heir by employing the contrivances of thy gray head to augment the Estate thou intendest to leave him. Alas, Wretch, (saith he) thou art mistaken. Thy young Spark *odit incrementa hereditatis suæ, ad damna festinat*; thinks thou art getting too long, and would fain have thee make

an end of thy Trade of gaining, that he may begin his of spending what thou hast already gained.

And thus have I shewn you the advantage that in point of *Profitableness*, *Giving* hath beyond *Receiving*, in reference to this world, and the Concerns thereof; both in *Life*, in *Death*, and *after Death*. But the greatest Instance of the *Profit* that comes thereby, is

(2. In reference to the *World to come*. For (although there be no proper *Merit* in *Bounty*, how large soever, or however well qualified, to purchase everlasting happiness; (no, far be such a thought from the breast of any charitable man;) for, *our good* in this life, be it what it will, *extends not to God*, as it must, if it properly deserve any thing at his hands: yet) whiles we *extend our bounties to the Saints that are on earth*, with such dispositions as
 God

God requires, we come under a capacity of being rewarded with eternal felicity, by vertue of his Promise ; who hath assured us, that he will not *forget our work* Heb.6.10. *and labour of love* in this kinde : and if we thus *sow to the Spirit*, Gal.6.7,8. by taking *opportunities of doing good*, we *shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting*. Upon the account of which security of Divine Promises, a good man by his Charities may have a stock going in another world while he lives, and when he comes to die, may transport, by *Bills of Exchange* (as it were) that cumbersome wealth, which no man can, (as the Psal- Ps. 49.17. mist faith) *carry with him* in kind : and thus do our *good works follow* us into Heaven which we did 13. Apoc. 14. upon Earth ; and the more they here *abounded* to the relief of others, the more will they *abound* there (as Fruits of the Spirit) to Phil.4.17. *our account*. When God and the truely charitable man come to

reckon, (O happy reckoning!) with what infinite satisfaction shall he finde all his great and numerous *Debts* to Gods Justice by the blood and merit of Christ eternally *cancel'd*, and his *good deeds* only *booked* by God (acknowledging himself by his gracious Promise his debtour;) to be everlastingly rewarded; and that so punctually, that not so much as

Matth. 10.
41.

a *cup of cold water* bestowed upon a charitable account shall be forgotten.

Luk. 16. 9.

In this respect it is, that our Bounties are said to *make us friends to receive us into everlasting habitations*; to wit, such, as (in Gods name and for his sake) receive from us: who, as they assist us whiles they live here, by their prayers to obtain them; and by acknowledging the receipt of what we bestow on them in their thanks to God for us, do (as it were) give us those Bills of Exchange which I before spake of

of to draw upon God for them :
so, when they die, and arrive at
the same place of happiness them-
selves, they personally attest to
those Charities they have receiv-
ed, to make good our Title to
those *Blessed Mansions*.

And thence it is, that our Sa-
viour (acquainting us with the
form of the Proceedings in the
last Judgement,) doth not only
tell us, that our Charities will
then be the great matters on
which we shall be tryed : but al-
so, not obscurely intimates, that
the Testimonials of his poor mem-
bers then present, will stand us
in great stead, as our witnesses ;
for so that phrase seems to im-
port, *Forasmuch as ye have done it* Mat. 25.
for the least of these my Brethren, 40.
(who are here ready to attest it)
ye have done it unto me.

Whereas, on the contrary, the
sordid and *tenacious Receiver*, as
he in his life-time loved his
wealth too well to lay it out,
though

though for the good of his Soul,
*(amator mammonæ potius quam
 animæ, in St. Cyprians phrase)*
 and therefore hath no good works
 there recorded, no seed sown in
 that Countrey, to yield him any
fruit towards his account : so he
 hath never a friend there to open
 his mouth for him, and give him
 a friendly Testimony in that
 Judgment. And, by consequence,
 how rich soever he was in this
 world, he must needs be poor,
 and naked, and every way mise-
 rable in another : *having had all
 his good things in this life,* (as the
 Lu. 16. 25. rich Glutton in Hell is told to his
 eternal discomfort,) he hath no-
 thing to lay claim to in the next.
 Yea, (which is infinitely worse)
 as he hath *shewed no mercy upon
 Earth,* so in the other world he
 Jam. 2. 13. shall have *Judgment without mercy,*
 and not receive a drop of comfort
 there, who denyed his very crumbs
 to his necessitous Brother here.

And thus have I justified the
 Doctrine

Doctrine of my Text fully, by the *foundations of Reason* it self upon which it stands: and so dispatched the *second part* of my intended Discourse upon it. I come now to my *third* and last undertaking, to give you an account of

III. The *Inferences* or *practical Uses* which it affords us, by way of deduction from it. In five Particulars.

[I. It hence follows, that God hath put every mans *present Blessedness*, (at least) in a great measure, in his own power.

For you see, the *Acts* by which it is very much to be promoted in this Life, are within the reach of his own choyce; such the *Acts of Giving* are: and if a man (withall) take care to perform those Acts according to the measures of true Christianity, he may also thereby, as the Apostle saith, *lay up in store for himself a good foundation against the Time to come,* ^{2 Tim. 6.}

*The blessedness of being bountiful.
come, that he may lay hold on eternal life also.*

Obj. Will it be here objected, that the contrary seems to be the more proper Inference, [That God hath rather dealt hardly with the greater part of Mankinde, in that he hath put them rather under a necessity of Receiving than a capacity of Giving, by reason of the narrowness of their Estates, and incumbrances of their worldly circumstances ?]

Sol. If so; I answer, (1) That the Giving in the Text extends not only to the donation of worldly wealth, but also, to all other ways wherein one man may be gratuitously benefited by another; so that he that cannot give money or money-worth, is not excluded from this blessedness by his poverty; seeing there be other ways of benefiting others, that put a man to no temporal expense. Our Counsels, and our Instructions, our Compassions, and our

our *Visits* upon many occasions to express them, our *good words* (many Times) to men, and our *Prayers* to God, alwayes; are reall and great Charities, where we have nothing else to give.

(2.) That, even in reference to temporal Gifts, as there be few men, but often meet with objects more necessitous than themselves; so there are few so disabled, but by their labours they might, if they would, not only maintain themselves, but also be sufficiently provided to allow something out of their earnings to relieve those who (either through age or impotency) cannot labour for their own subsistence. (3.) And that the greatest part of those whose temporall condition is strait and uneasy, yet disable themselves more by their Lusts. Those Pence, yea Shillings and Pounds sometimes, which divers ordinary Labourers and Handicraftsmen expend in needless company.

pany-keeping, in Pride of Apparel, and finer Fare than their condition and capacity will easily allow; might amount to considerable Charities, if employed that way. (4.) And lastly, that not *actual giving* only, but *intentional* and dispositive also, where power is wanting, will reach the *blessedness* of the Text; God accepting the *desire* which a man *hath*, in such cases, in stead of the performance, which a man *hath not* in his own power. Inso-

2 Cor. 8.
12. much that *two mites* are, from the *poor Widow*, accounted *more*, than the great Gifts of wealthy Benefactors. So that, though every man cannot in kinde equall the great charitable Donations of Kings and Princes; yet he doth not only equal but exceed them too, in Gods account, who hath a minde as large as theirs, though in a far meaner condition: and *gives* (for generosity) *as a King*, though (for Estate) he

Luk. 21. 3.

2 Sam. 24.
23.

he come short of ordinary subjects.

From all which, my *first Inference* appears not to be ill gathered; that the good God hath put this *Blessedness* so far in every mans power, that no man, if it be not through his own fault, is excluded from a capacity of obtaining it.

[2. It hence follows also, that those men are so far enemies to their own *Blessedness*, as the import of this Text extends; who wilfully disable themselves to give, and unnecessarily cast themselves upon a necessity of receiving; and receiving too, in a most dishonourable and ungodly way, as too many doe.

(1. Such are those (in the *first place*) who out of love to sloath and idleness, choose rather to begg, or steal, than work for their living. Though indeed, as to this sort of men, I needed not to have distinguished betwixt begging

ging and *stealing*; as if all that did needlessly *begge*, did not with-
all *steal*. For, the Truth is, every
lusty Beggar and sturdy Vagrant
is a *Thief*; even while he *beggs*,
and takes no more than is volun-
tarily *given* him. For so the A-
postle plainly insinuates, when
Eph. 4. 28. he commands *those that stole to*
steal no more, but rather to labour
with their hands that they may
have to give to him that needeth.
Whence it evidently follows, that
he accounts him that was a *Thief*
before, to be the same still, and
not to have left that Trade; who
labours not, but lives upon the
bounty of others, when by his
labour he might put himself into
a condition not to need it, yea,
and to be able to contribute to
others needs.

And indeed, such an one is not
only *one way*, but *many wayes* a
Thief: and commits a compli-
cated Theft in every Alms he re-
ceives.

(1.) He

(1.) He *robs God* of the Bountyes he begs and takes of men for Gods sake, as truly, as he robs his Neighbour, who in his name, without his order, takes up wares at any of your Shops. (2^{ly}.) He *robs himself* of the gains which he might honestly make, and the Credit in which he might live, by a laborious Calling. And (3^{ly}.) he *robs* those that are *truly poor*, in divers respects: both by *defrauding* them of that portion of subsistence, which they are entituled unto out of his own earnings, if he laboured as he should; and by *diverting* into a wrong Channel the Charities of others, which belong to them, whereby he eats the bread out of their mouths, and wears the Cloaths that belong to their backs; and lastly, by *obstructing* and discouraging the Incomes and Revenues of general Bounty; which would be more plentiful to the really necessitous, if

G they

they were not overlay'd by such supernumerary multitudes of importunate and clamorous Beggars, that deserve not an *Almes*, and yet will not take an *Answer*.

(2. Such as take to that way of living, out of a false opinion of meriting thereby. Which is the course of all those idle Drones and lusty Mendicants among the Papists, who make voluntary Poverty a Religious Profession, and place a great degree of Christian Perfection in a Vow of continual Begging: as if they were resolved to give the flat lye to our Saviour Christ himself by inverting my Text; and pronounce, (in direct opposition to him,) *that it is more blessed to receive than give*. These Persons are not only equally criminal with others of the Tribe of idle Vagrants and lusty Beggars, for breaking Gods Commandment, that appoints all men to live by the labours of an honest Calling; but far more criminal

criminal than they, because they blasphemously entitle God himself to the Patronage of their disorderly and irregular living ; and affirm that which is an expresse breach of his Law, to be a work of supererogation, that is, of greater perfection than it requires : and perswade the poor people where they reside, that to give to maintain their idle bellies, is an act of *highest merit* ; whereas (indeed) it is the greatest *misplacing* of their Charity that can be, as being a direct abetting and encouraging them in a wicked and ungodly way.

(3. Such as through prodigal Expenses upon their Lusts and Debaucheries, cast themselves into a necessity of *receiving* by vicious living. Wherein, besides the depriving themselves of that capacity wherein Gods Providence once placed them of contributing to their own *Blessedness* by *Bounty*; and the simple infe-

licity which they draw upon themselves of needing *Alms* from others, who were once able to have bestowed them upon others: they expose themselves likewise to the aggravated misery of *receiving* just reproaches with their relief, both from their own Consciences, and the tongues of those whose Charities they implore: and can hardly, without a great degree of impudence, dare to begg in Gods Name, who have reduced themselves to Beggery in the Devils service. To whom, indeed, (as to both the former sorts also) your *Bridewell* is the most proper *Almes-house*, and the due Correction and Discipline thereof the most proper *Almes*. And yet,

[3. It hence follows also, that no man ought to despise any miserable object, whose true Necessities call upon him for his Bounty: either by *shutting up the bowels of his compassion from him,*

1 Joh. 3.
17.

or

or bestowing the Charities he gives, so, as to clogg and lessen them with opprobrious or disdainfull circumstances. And that, upon *these considerations*, which hold also from the import of my Text.

(1. That whosoever he be, that is presented to thee as an object of thy Charity, gives thee, (whoever thou art,) an opportunity of doing thy self a far better turn than thou canst do him. For how were it possible that any one could ever attain the *Blessedness of actual giving*, if there were none to *receive*? And therefore, it is a mercy of God to the Rich, that he hath so ordered it by his Providence, that they shall *have the poor with them alwayes*; in that he thereby affords them daily occasions, of making themselves *blessed* by the continual exercise of their Bounty.

Mat; 26.
11.

(2. That if (as among many that are not so in these necessi-

tous times, some certainly are) any of the Petitioners for thy Almes be truly *worthy* ; that which he returns to thee in thanks and prayers, is a *greater gift* than he *receives* from thee. For whiles he *blesseth God* for thee, and *blesseth thee* in his requests to God to requite thee ; he gives thee security of the repayment of that which thou givest him, with the greatest Interest, out of Gods Exchequer. And though (it may be) thou knowest not particularly, when those payments are made thee ; yet thou hast reason to believe , that the prospering of thy worldly concerns (in general, if they go on prosperously) is a cumulative reward of thy several Charities together ; and (it may be, in particular also) thou owest the return of thy next rich adventure, or the success of thy next gainfull Bargain, to the last poor mans Prayers that thou didst relieve.

(3. And,

(3. And, *thirdly*; that if he that asks thy Charity, be never so unworthy, upon whatever accounts, (even the worst of those mentioned in my former Inference,) yet by that very *unworthiness*, (whiles his present necessities require relief,) he gives thee an ampler opportunity of heightning thy *generosity* by the hopelesness of being ever requited by him in any kinde; and herein rendring thy self the more like to God himself; who takes it for a great addition to the honour of his bounty, that he *doeth good to the unthankfull, and Luk.6.35. causeth his Sun to shine upon the evil and the good, and his rain Mat.5.45. to fall upon the just and the unjust.*

[4. This Truth gives us wofull (and yet plentiful) occasion to wonder at and bewail that Iron-heartedness of the uncharitable Age in which we live; and the gross *Infidelity*, or *blockish Stupidity*,

dity, or both, of the great *Receivers*, the men of ample Estates and Revenues of the world. Their *gross Infidelity*, if they believe not the Doctrine of my Text, so positively asserted by our Saviour, attested by so great an Apostle, and standing withall upon such firm foundations of unanswerable Reason, as I have before shewn you this, if any in the Bible, doth. And if they do believe it, and yet act contrary to the evident import of it, *their monstrous Stupidity*; who are so little sensible of, or affected with, so great a part of their greatest concern, *Blessedness*.

These rich *Misers* (as they are most truly called by a Name most opposite to *Blessedness*) both my subject, and my inclinations, lead me here to prosecute with the sharpest and keenest of reproofs. But I shall forbear, considering, that their own Consciences (if they have any) must needs (upon
the

the Principles I have before laid down) do that work sufficiently for me: at least, that by their own tacite Confession, they have cause to doe so, and they continually stand in fear that they will; seeing they meditate so many *Excuses* to guard themselves from their lashes, as they are constantly wont to doe.

And yet (*unhappy* men that they are!) it fares so unluckily with them, that those very *Excuses* which they are wont to make use of to stave off all charitable motions suggested to them from others, and stifle their own workings of good nature, if at any time they stir, in their bosoms; doe only serve to declare how willing, and withall how skilfull and ingenious they are, to cheat themselves of their own *Blessedness*. And this you will abundantly see, (and they too, if their eyes be not totally blinded) by this brief examination of the most usual

usual of them by the measures of this blessed Proverb of our Saviour.

Obj. The first, (and that that is most ready in all their mouths, when any considerable Charities are suggested to them) is; *such and such are better able to give than they, and they will first see what they give, that they may follow their Example.*

Sol. That is, (being interpreted according to the Tenour of this Text) either, that they are willing to make this great Complement to their Neighbours, that they are content to yield to them the precedency, though in point of *Blessedness* it self; and think it *good manners*, (even therein,) to *let their betters goe before them.* But these men ought to consider, that it is a dear and costly complement, that loseth a man an opportunity of making himself *Blessed*; yea, or any way retardeth it.

Or else, that they are desirous
to

to have the price of *blessedness* it self beaten down by other Chapmen, before they will deal in the commodity : which implyes, that they are afraid of purchasing it for more than it is worth ; a conceit that no man ever entertained before them in matter of *Blessedness*, which generally men think to be well purchased at the price of all that can be asked for it.

Obj. A second usual excuse is, *They are not the men the world takes them for ; not so rich, or well to pass (as they say) as they are reputed.*

Sol. Nor so wise neither, as they desire to be reputed, if this *Doctrine* be true ; who have an opportunity offered of making the best Bargain they ever made in their lives, for *Blessedness* it self, and yet want an heart to make use of it.

Obj. *Charities that have been bestowed by others before them,*
have

The blessedness of being bountiful.

have been misemployed; and they will be satisfied that those are better disposed before they give more.

Sol. The true meaning of this excuse is (being measured by the standard of my Text) that they are unwilling to be *blessed* themselves, till they can be assured that all the world is *honest*. And both, (if they continue of this minde,) are like to fall out together.

Obj. There are so many objects of Charity, that it is even oppressed with the number; and it is to little purpose for a man to give to one or two, except he could give to all that need; for (at this rate) he cannot foresee, if he once begin to be charitable, when he shall make an end.

Sol. That is, thou art sorely grieved, that thou hast so many opportunities offered to make thy self *blessed*; and art afraid, that the taking hold of those that are set before thee will draw on more;

more; so that thou shalt never make an end of *accumulating blessedness* to thy self. Is this a rational fear?

Obj. *Times are hard; Trading is dead; Customers break daily in their debts; they run great hazards in the small dealings the hard Times afford them; &c.*

Sol. Did ever rational Creature argue at this Rate? *Times are bad; Ergo, 'tis out of season to make my self blessed. Trading is dead; Ergo, I am unwilling to deal in that Commodity, which yields the quickest and the richest Returns. Customers break; therefore I resolve to deal still with breaking Customers, and not with God that can never break. I run great hazards in the Trade I drive; therefore I am loth to take the best course in the world to ensure my Adventures; the taking God into Partnership with me in them. I commended some persons before to*
the

the Discipline of *one* of your Hospitals, that of *Bridewell*: And the men that argue at this rate, are as worthy to come under the Discipline of the *other*, that of *Bethlem*.

Obj. *I have Wife and Children to provide for, and I think myself obliged in the first place to take care of them: for if I neglect them, the Apostle tells me, I am worse than an Infidel.*

1 Tim. 5.
8.

Sol. That is, thou art desirous to provide *better* for them, than to make them *blessed*; which, I have told you before, the Families and Posterity of liberal men are. Nay (which is worse,) thou art willing to bequeath them a *Curse* in stead of a *Blessing*: to leave them an Estate *blown upon* and blasted by divine malediction, and yet to look on this as a *good Provision* for them: which, it is (indeed) to be *worse than the worst of Infidels*, so much as to imagine.

Obj. *I*

Obj. *I intend such and such Charities when I die, and therefore desire not to be importuned till then in things of this Nature.*

Sol. That is, in plainer Terms, (if my Text be true) that thou art resolved to part with nothing, (no not for *Blessedness* it self,) till thou needs *must*; that thou thinkest thy Executors fitter to be entrusted with thy greatest Concern, (that of *Blessedness*) than thy self, and art willing to hazard it upon their fidelity; That thou art afraid of being *blessed* till thou come to *die*: as if (contrary to the desire of all mankind) thou thoughtest it out of season to foretaste any part of it in this life.

Did you ever hear any thing that pretended to Reason and Argument, more unluckily confuting it self, than all these *excuses* that I have mentioned, do? And yet (such is the folly of sordid penuriousness,) there are a
great

great many more of the same bran, perpetually in the mouths of the men that are *rich in this world* (as our Saviour saith) *but not rich towards God* ; which, though I mention not, yet (by the measures I have given you from this Text) you may (whenever you meet with them) your selves prove to be no less guilty of a like felonious destroying themselves.

And now the foolish Mammonist, that thinks to hide his nakedness with these Fig-leaves, may see, that if his own Excuses taken up for his defence, thus fight against him in the judgement of men ; they will be more killingly managed against him before the Judgement-seat of Jesus Christ : who is infinitely better able to manage the consequences of his own Doctrine, than I or any other Preacher can ; and will undoubtedly then shew all the world, what great Fools they are,
that

that are so *wise in their own conceits*, to evade the Duty that he requires of them, and cheat themselves.

And are these, now, the men whom the fond world is so apt to admire as shrewd men, for parts and cunning contrivances to advance themselves? whose examples they set before their sons; and whose *sayings* they are wont to approve and quote as the great rules of living happily; and pre-
ferre them before this and others of like nature, that are recommended to them, from the mouth of their blessed Saviour, and the holy Pen-men of the Sacred Scriptures? Or, are they not rather persons whose *way is folly*; whose *sayings* (indeed,) are only worthy to be reckoned among the wild and extravagant discourses of Children and Mad-men; and themselves to be numbred, as the Spirit of God ranks them, among
the beasts that perish?

Ps. 49:13.

V. 20.

H

[5. It

[5. It hence follows, that to *excite* and *direct* any mans *charity* (how ungratefull soever this Office of kindness seem to some) is really an obliging courtesie; because the intent of it is, (properly) to assist him towards the making himself *bleſſed*.

Upon which account (hoping I have here to deal with those that will so interpret my intentions) I shall apply my self (in the last place) to *exhort* you to Charitable Actions, and *direct* you in the performance of them.

(1. To *exhort* you, to the serious practice of this Doctrine: to be mercifull, and bountifull, compassionate and charitable; *rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; doing good to all men as you have opportunity*; obliging all the world, as far as in you lyes, by reall benefits, and effects of diffusive goodness.

1 Tim. 6.
18.

Gal. 6.10.

To perswade you whercunto, I
hope

hope I shall need no other Arguments, than (in the prosecution of this Text) I have already at large insisted on: And therefore I shall only make some short reflexions upon it to my present purpose, and leave it to you to enlarge upon them, (which I hope you will doe) in your private Meditations.

(1.) And first, I intreat you from thence to inform your selves, what it is that I perswade you to. Is it not, (that which you all profess, as your very nature inclines you, to desire above all things,) *to make your selves blessed?* Is it not that, which all men (though they take different wayes to it, according to their several apprehensions) do design and pursue?

(2.) Will you say, you agree with me indeed in the *end*, but you are not so well satisfied in the *means* I advise you to for the attainment of it? Does it stick

with you, that *giving*, (to which you are so averse,) is recommended as the way to *blessedness*? Do I, therefore, say this of my self, or saith not the Scripture the same also? View the Text again, and read there; [*It is a blessed thing to give.*]

(3.) Is it an *inferiour* and *less effectual* means to the attainment of that end, than (that which the general practice of mankind seems more to recommend,) the way of *receiving*; that is, of *getting* and *keeping* the good things of this life to your selves? Glance on it again, and it tells you farther, [*It is more blessed to give, than to receive.*]

(4.) Does this seem an *hard saying* to you; a *Paradox*, which you are difficult to believe without good Vouchers to assure you of the Truth of it? Look on once more, and you will finde, it is quoted, as the *saying of the Lord Jesus*, an Authour beyond all exception,

ception, (especially to Christians, as we all profess our selves :) and one, who, (as I have before shewed you) is the most competent Judge, in this case, of all men that ever were, or shall be.

(5.) Do you question, whether he indeed said so, or is rather quoted as if he had said it, to give reputation to that which had its original from an obscurer Author? Surely, you cannot be of that minde ; when you look backward, and there read, that it is a *saying* attributed to our Saviour, by the *great Apostle St. Paul*, in a Solemn Visitation Sermon, before the *Elders of Ephesus*, whom he calls in as Witnesses to the Verity of his Quotation, as I told you before ; and knew, if he had falsified in that quotation, they were able to have confuted him.

(6.) Does it seem, (seeing it is only in this *one place* taken notice of,) to be a casual word

H 3 dropped

dropped from him by the by, (as we sometimes throw out Paradoxes to maintain discourse,) without Premeditation; and therefore used only once or twice by him; not frequently, much less constantly, as an axiome of approved Verity? The very form of the Apostles quotation confutes this conceit, for it is quoted, as *Proverbs* are wont to be, with an implication, that it was his familiar and constant word, for which he was noted, as governing his whole life by this Principle.

(7.) Will you object (as we are wont to be very inventive when we study excuses to ward off a Truth we have no minde to entertain) that it was a *saying* (indeed) of *his*; but hardly thought great enough to be quoted from him, by any of those Apostles that heard him, or recommended to Posterity by any one but him that heard him not in person; they

they that did so, not minding it so much as to commit it to memory? The *Text* also confutes this fond conceit. For it supposeth it to be famously known, even as far as *Ephesus*; and so noted, that it needed only to be *remembered* by them actually, as a constant motive to Beneficence, which they had long before treasured up in their memories notionally, as a *saying* of special note and eminency.

(8.) *Lastly*, will you suppose, that the Apostle, (who then quoted it, as he had occasion, to stir up the Charity of Christians,) did, (as too many Preachers do,) press upon his Auditory a *saying of our Lord Jesus*, which he, and his Brethren did not so far value themselves, as to practise it in their own Persons? Look then a little farther backward of the *Text*, and you will finde him there urging his own *example* and *experience* in the practical use of

Y. 34.

this Principle. For he appeals to all their knowledges, to attest, that his *own hands* (whiles he preached the Gospel freely among them) *ministred* (by daily labouring) *to his and his companions necessities*; and that he exhorted them not only to follow their *Saviours Doctrine*, but also his *own example* in conformity to it.

So that you see, beloved, no starting-hole is left (by the prudent fore-sight of the holy Penman of this Scripture,) for infidelity to escape the force and authority thereof: but every word and circumstance so ordered as to contribute more strength and efficacy to it.

And now, what shall I say more, what need I to say more, upon this head? If such a saying, of such an Authour, recommended to you by such an Oratour, in such an Assembly, in so solemn and affectionate a manner, and preferred by him to that place in
his

his discourse which was most likely to commend it to the special notice and remembrance of his hearers, (the very last close and concluding period of the last Sermon that ever he was to make among them:) I say, if such a *saying*, so circumstantiated, will not bear weight with you: it will be vain for me to imagine, that any thing said by me super-added thereunto, should be of any force or prevalency upon you.

And therefore, (for a close of this part of my Address to you) I shall only recommend it to your own thoughts as a matter of serious consideration, how you will answer it at the last day, when that blessed Apostle, that spake these words from the mouth of our Lord Jesus, and that holy Evangelist who hath transmitted them on Sacred Record to us, (that I joyn not my self with them who have all this while

while been pressing them upon you,) shall take up the Prophets complaint against you, and say,

Iſa. 53. 1. Lord, who hath believed our report ?

Yea, when your blessed Saviour himself shall charge you with infidelity, as those in whom *his*

Joh. 8. 37. own words have no place ? How

do you think, you shall be able to look him in the face, when it shall be objected to you before his terrible Tribunal, that the dirty Principles, and sordid Practices of a brutish sort of Worldlings and Muckworms, have had more force with you for the government of your lives, than his heavenly Doctrine, and glorious Example ? that you never stuck at the gratifying your lusts with vast expenses, whenever they called for them ; and never dropped half-pence or farthings so penuriously on any occasion, as when you were called upon in his Name and for his sake to promote a good work ? that the Furniture

niture of one room to beautifie your new dwellings, the expense of one Treatment to entertain your riotous Guests, the price of one Jewel or other costly Ornament to expresse your vain Pride, the charge of one Moneths keeping for a cast of Hawks or a kennel of Hounds, for your Countrey Recreation; yea, (which is far worse,) the great stakes that you adventure upon one cast of a Die, the value of one bribe to blinde the eyes of Justice, and promote a wrongfull cause, the Hire of an Harlot for one nights sinfull pleasure, and the like rates of other costly Debaucheries, (*toties quoties*,) amounted to more by far, than all the summes, put all together, that all your lives long, you have bestowed upon Religious and Charitable Uses?

Are these, my friends, are these the *fruits* that you desire may *abound to your account at that* Phil. 4. 17. *Day?* If they be, I fear, you will
make

- make but a *sad account* where such *Items* make up the dolefull reckoning. Is this the way you
- Lu. 16. 9. take to *make you friends to receive you, when you fail, into everlasting habitations*? If so, I doubt, your Lodgings will be provided for you on the wrong side of the other world: not in the *House*
- 2 Cor. 5. 1. *made without hands, eternal in the Heavens*; but the *Furnace of everlasting Fire*, and the *Dungeon of everlasting darkness*. Is this the way wherein you think to
- 1 Tim. 6. 19. *lay up in store a good foundation for the time to come, that you may lay hold of eternal life*? If it be, I am sorely afraid, you will finde you have mistaken your ground, and built your hopes upon the *sand without a foundation*; as our Saviour tells us all those doe, who hear his sayings (of which my
- Mat. 7. 26. Text is one of the chief,) *and do them not*.

But it may be, I have stood longer than needed upon this Exhortation,

hortation, to those, divers of whom, (as the Apostle speaks in commendation of the *Macedonians* ^{2 Cor. 8.}) are *to their power, yea and 3. beyond their power already willing of themselves; who devise liberal* ^{1a. 32.8.} *things*, and need only to be instructed how they may reduce their own good inclinations to act, and pursue their bountifull intentions, in such a sort, as to make them most effectually contributory to the *blessedness* which my Text promiseth them.

Which, if it be so, (and I am willing in my Charity to so worthy an Auditory to presume it to be so;) gives me occasion in the next place, to enter on my last task, *viz.*

(2. To give you such *directions*, in the pursuance whereof, you may amply experiment the truth of this Doctrine in yourselves. All which (as you will see,) have so much countenance from the *Text* it self, that you may

110 *The blessedness of being bountiful,*
may take them all for further
Deductions and Inferences from
it.

1.) The first shall concern the
matter of your Charity; which
must consist of that which is pro-
perly *your own to give*. The *foun-*
tains of Charity that you disperse
abroad, and the *rivers that* (like
your New River) you derive
through the streets, (to allude to
that of Solomon in another case,)

Prov. 9. *ought to be only your own, and*
16, 17, 18. *no strangers with you*; that your

own bountifull Souls (the grand
Fountain from whence they pro-
ceed,) may be *blessed*. Other-

Isa. 61. 8. *wise, God that hates Robbery for*
a Burnt-offering, will never look
upon your *good deeds* of this kind

Heb. 13. *as sacrifices wherewith he is well*
16. *pleased*. There is a *Curse* upon all

those temporal *blessings* , which
are the fruits of Theft and Ra-
pine, of Cheating and Cousen-
age, of Bribery and Extortion;
and (which is commonly least
thought

thought of) the Sacrilegious spoys of his Church , and its Sacred Revenues : and *blessedness* can never grow upon that Stock, that (like the worm at that of *Jonah 4.7.* *Jonas* his Gourd) hath *Gods Curse* at the *root* of it.

Besides, the palpable Cheat that the very Design of reaping *blessedness* to a mans self from that seed which is stolne out of his Neighbours Barn, does imply ; is such a mockery of God, (who in such matters is *not to be mocked,*) *Gal. 6.7.* that such a *Giver* (as *Jacob* did when he attempted in his Brothers Garments to rob him of his Fathers Benediction) may rather fear he shall by that very attempt, (if he were never so secure of it before,) *bring a Curse* *Gen. 27.* *upon himself rather than a Blessing.* ^{12.}

2.) The *motives* of it, must be *Christian*. For it is from *Christ*, that the *Blessedness* of the Text must be expected: and he that seeks

seeks *blessedness* from *Christs Promise* must govern himself by *his Precepts*: as in all other particulars, so in the ends and motives upon which he seeks it. Now those must be; pure obedience
 1 Pet. 2. 3. to the Command of Christ, and
 Heb. 13. Faith of being accepted in him;
 16. the glory of our Father which is
 Mat. 5. 16. in heaven, and the causing through
 2 Cor. 9. our rich bounty thanksgivings to
 11, 12, 13. him to be abundant; the professing
 our subjection to the Gospel of
 Col. 1. 10. Christ; the walking worthy of the
 Lord to all pleasing by our fruit-
 fulness in every good work; the
 Jam. 2. 18. shewing our Faith; the adorning
 Tit. 2. 10. of the Doctrine of our Lord Je-
 1 Tim. 2. sus, and the Profession of Godli-
 10. ness.

These, and the like motives
 and designs of Charity, we finde
 recommended to Christians, by
 our Saviour and his Apostles;
 by which we ought to direct our
 intentions therein, that we may
 be *blessed in our deed*. But where
 the

the *Romish Church* learns those, which in the greatest Charities they boast so much of, have usually the greatest Influence, (the obtaining the pardon of sins, the delivering their own and others Souls out of Purgatory, and the meriting of Eternal Life,) I know not. I am sure, they have little countenance from Scripture: which, as it knows no Purgatory, and therefore directs no such means to any one to get out of it; so, can no expressions be found therein, that give any just countenance to expect either pardon of sins, or eternal life, as the merit of our Charities. For, if (as the Papists plead) the Scripture bids us *break off our sins by righteousness, and our iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor;* yet it is only, (as in *Nebuchadnezzars* case) the changing a course of oppression and unjust violence by Repentance into that of Charity and Beneficence, Dan. 4. 27]

I which

114 *The blessedness of being bountiful.*

- which is there intended. If it
 1 Pct. 4. 8. tell us, that *Charity hideth a multitude of sins*, it means only preventively, in reference to the passionate effects of an uncharitable temper which *stirreth up*
 Prov. 10. 12. *strife*, as the opposition in *Solomons* Text whence it is quoted, interprets it. And to all other such places of Scripture, it self gives us this one grand Barre against expounding them to that Popish sense, that it tells us, that God hath appointed us another
 1 Joh. 2. 2. sufficient *Propitiation for our sins*, who hath undertaken by himself, (and therefore needs not our Charities to assist him in this
 Heb. 1. 3. work) to *purge them*. And if it allow us (as a secondary end) to have a respect to *Eternal Life* in our good deeds of this kinde, yet it is only in order to the *disposing* our selves for it, by such
 Col. 3. 14. actions as *perfect* and improve us in Christianity, of which *Charity* in its full latitude is one; and
 not

not to encourage us in a fond opinion of *meriting* it by them. For it withall tells us, that we must receive the very *reward* of our good works as a *Gift*, not Rom. 6. as *Wages*, from God; and ac- 23. knowledge, when we have *done all*, (if we could do all) that we ought, in this or any other kind, that we are even then but un- Lu. 17. 10. profitable servants; and lastly, that we must look to *be saved not by works of righteousness which Tit. 3. 5.* we have done, but of Gods mere grace and mercy.

3.) The *manner* in which our *Charities* must be performed, shall be the matter of my *third Direction*. And that includes *these particulars*: Which also receive like countenance from the Text.

(1.) *Readiness* and *voluntary forwardness* of Minde, which (as I told you before) the Apostle so highly commends in the *Macedonians*; and also in the *Corin-* 2 Cor. 8. *thians*, to whom he propounds 3. 10.

I 2 their

their example, for their farther encouragement. And this evidently follows from the Doctrine contained in my Text. For there can be nothing more absurd, than to pretend a belief, that it is so great a *blessedness to give*; and yet to need to be forced by Law, or constrained by importunity thereunto: seeing there is nothing toward which we move with more freeness, than that that (we understand or believe) tends to make us *blessed*.

- (2.) *Speediness and Celerity.*
Solomon requires us, in such cases, not to say to an indigent
 Pro. 3. 28. Neighbour, *Goe, and come again,*
and to morrow I will give; and
 we are required by the Apostle,
 not to let slip the *καιρος*, the pro-
 Gal. 6. 10. per season or opportunity of doing
good; than which there is no-
 thing of a quicker motion, or
 will sooner slip by us if neglect-
 ed, and therefore it ought in all
 Eph. 5. 16. duties to be *redeemed*, by a care-
 full

full taking hold of it. And this (saith *Seneca*) is an argument of our *unwillingness* to such bountifull acts, when we are slow in doing of them. *Qui tardè fecit beneficium, diu noluit.* This direction also follows from the Text. For it implies a Contradiction, for any one to *move slowly* to that wherein he looks for *Blessedness*.

(3.) *Simplicity*, or *singleness of heart*, must be another Ingredient in all our acts of Charity; which disclaims all by-ends and designs folded together with those true Christian ends which (I before told you) we ought herein to confine our selves unto. He that gives for *ostentation* or *vain-glory*, or any ambitious project, and *blowes* (with the *Mat. 5. 1, 2.* Pharisees) a trumpet before his *Almes*, to call spectators, *hath his Reward*, saith our Saviour; *i. e.* forfeits the *true blessedness* his Bounty would otherwise yield
I 3 him,

him, by an imaginary felicity he takes in the *vain applause of men*. He that *gives* with a *covetous design*, (as some do) to those from whom he hopes to *receive* in the like kinde, makes *receiving*, his *blessedness*; not *giving*: because he makes that the *end* and this the *means*. Now that hath not in it the true nature of *Blessedness*, that needs any thing else to make it desirable.

(4.) *Plentifulness*, and *abundance*. So the Apostle directs the *Corinthians* to extend their *Charity*, as a *matter of Bounty not of Covetousness*. Not, as if we were to *buy a mean commodity* in the Market, wherein we are wont to beat down the Price as low as we can, even to halfpence and farthings: but as we would bid for a *Pearle of inestimable value*, which men think well bought at whatever rate: or as the *Competitors* bade for the *Roman Empire* (in its later Age when the *Pratorian*

Prætorian Souldiers made their markets of it,) that stuck at no summes to out-bid each other. For so *Blessedness* deserves to be purchased: he that under-rates it, is never likely to obtain it. *He that soweth sparingly* (saith the Apostle, in this Argument,) *shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully.* A narrow-hearted giver, is as foolish, as he that from a few grains of Wheat expects to reap an Harvest like the rich mans in the Gospel, that was fain to enlarge his *Barns* to receive his encrease.

5. *Constancy and Perseverance.* We must not (saith the Apostle also, in this affair) be weary of well-doing. Our goodness must herein imitate Gods, which (as the Psalmist tells us) endureth continually. We must sowe our seed of Charity in the morning of our life, and in the evening we must not withhold our hand. And this also

follows from the Doctrine of the Text. For that which we most desire in *blessedness*, (and which, indeed, compleats it,) is *duration*. And therefore those acts by which it is attained, cannot rationally be wearisome; seeing *lassitude* can never be a companion of *felicity*.

4.) The *Measures* and *Proportions* of your *Charity* shall fill the *last place* in these *Directions*. And those also are not obscurely to be determined, from the import of this Doctrine. And that both

1. In general, and
2. In special.

(1.) In general; for the *portioning* all your *Charities*, you ought to consider,

1. Your *own Abilities*: and those not measured by the Standard of Pride, Covetousness, and unbelieving distrust of Gods Providence; but by the rules of Christian prudence, considering all those circumstances which the condition of your affairs is accom-

companyed withall. For he that *gives much*, in comparison with others that are beneath him (it may be far more) in Estate; and yet *little*, in comparison of what he might afford: *withholdeth* (in *Solomons* Phrase) *more than is* Pro. II.
24. *meet*, and deserves *blessedness* should be measured to him, by the same *scanty measure*. And he, that by *giving* more than he can well spare, disables himself to *give*, deprives himself of so much *bles-sedness* for the *future*, as he loseth of the capacity he had, of continuing bountifull.

2. The *Receivers just capacity*; all his circumstances also being duely weighed in the same balance of Christian Prudence. For by *giving too* largely upon *one occasion*, a man is necessitated many times to lose many *future occasions* of advancing his *blessedness* in the way we are speaking of: and by *giving too little* to any one, he loseth the *present opportunity*,

nity, or at least improves it not to the best advantage to that end.

(2.) In *special*, for the *proportioning* of particular Bountyes and Charities, as they are to be diversly ordered, both in *precedency* and *quantity*, according to the different obligations which result from the diversity of objects and occasions: there are these *farther Rules* to be observed.

1. God, and our Countrey, our Parents, and our Children, and other near Relations, our former Benefactors and their Posterity, our Neighbours and Acquaintance, and among them *Gal. 6.9.* *specially those of the household of faith*, and those that are *industrious*, and not wonted to begge, but under some present providential exigency; &c. are to have (in their several circumstances proportionably,) the *cream* and chief of our Bounties; and the largest measures of it too. And from thence, we must descend to
all

all men, Christians and Heathens, worthy and unworthy, that are partakers of the same *common humanity* with us.

For the nature of the Soyl, on which we *sowe to reap blessedness*, (though no Soyl be altogether barren) is to be considered by the Seedsman; and the more fruitfull it is likely to be, the more seed is to be committed to it. Now, seeing all our good deeds of this kinde are so far contributory to our *blessedness*, as they are *accepted by God*, and approved by our own Consciences; and the measure of both these is our *Duty*: therefore where in Duty we are obliged to give *first* and *most*, we may expect a more early and plentiful Harvest.

2. Publick Charities are to be preferred before private; and to do good to many, is more to be chosen, than to confine a mans Beneficence to a few. The *blessedness* that results from *Bounty*,
(like

(like the beams that are reflected from an enlightened Body,) is more or less large and plentiful, according to the largeness of the object upon which it falls. And indeed, seeing the publick Benefactour, (of all men) is most like God, (the Sphere of whose Bounty is of equal dimensions with the whole world;) he cannot be supposed to approach less to him in *Blessedness* than he doth in *Bounty*: especially considering, that he is most communicative of himself, to those that most resemble him.

3. Perpetual Charities are to be preferred before those that are of short continuance. I mean, such as are bestowed upon Churches, Colledges, Schools, Hospitals, Almes-houses, and all other such uses as endure to successive Ages, and (as far as the Donours intention and design can reach it,) to the end of the world. I say, as far as the Donours design
can

can reach it ; because I know too often, those Charities that were intended to be immortall, are by the unfaithfulness or sacrilegious Covetousness of after Ages imbezelled and perverted to private uses : though (yet) that should discourage no mans Bounties, seeing God judgeth of them, by the *intendment* of the *Giver*, not by the *effect* of the *Gifts* themselves, which it was not in the power of the Giver perpetually to secure. And the reason why Charities of this nature are to be so preferred, is (by a fair Inference from the Text also,) because *perpetual Charities* bear the best proportion to that property of *Blessedness* (to which they contribute) which I told you before, consummates it ; that is, *Perpetuity*. For as to our *memory*, (which is the greatest *blessedness*, which we are capable of perpetuating in this world) this is the way to engage *all generations to*
call

call us blessed. And, as to our *Souls*, and the condition of them in another world; it may on fair grounds be presumed, that the bountifull rewarder of our good works, will proportion the extent of the reward to that of the work, and make perpetual additions of happiness to those in Heaven, whose Charities perpetually grow upon earth.

4. Lastly, Charities to Mens Souls, are to be preferred before those that extend only to their Bodies. For he is the *greatest Benefactor* to any one, that doth him the *greatest good*; which is, certainly, the *saving of his Soul*. And then, it follows from the Text, that the greater the good is that any man does to another, the greater is the *blessedness* that reflects from it: as that *Oven* that is most intensely heated, sends back a *greater* and more intense heat upon him that heats it, than that which is made hot in a lower degree. And

And thus, I have done with my Text, both as to *the Explication of the Terms*, the farther *confirmation of its Truth*, and the general *Inferences* arising from it. And what now remains, but to close up this Discourse with a word of *particular Application* to your selves, and your present occasions?

It is a thing notoriously known, that (for these *three* sorts of *Charity* last mentioned) this *famous City* hath in all Ages past yielded abundance of *blessed Benefactors*; as appears in the many *publick Monuments* thereof: and those so ordered, as to be *perpetual Reliefs* both to the *Bodies* and *Souls* of Men, to all succeeding Generations. And I no wayes doubt, but that the Names of many of the present Age, will be added to their worthy Predecessors, and transmitted, with like Honour to Posterity.

And though we must acknowledge,

ledge, that you the worthy *Trustees* for the several *Hospitals* of this City, deserve to be reckoned among the *blessed Givers* in the Text, though you give them no more than you daily do when just occasion requires; to wit, your *presence* and *countenance*, your *time* and *parts* and *pains*, which you might otherwise employ to your worldly advantage; and lastly, your *honest* and *faithfull care* in the manage-ry of your Trusts, with no profit or emolument thence accrewing to your selves: yet it is to be hoped, that you will also *bless your selves* yet farther, by adding, of your *own Donation*, to the Charities, which you govern and manage for your Predecessors.

And, in special, (as my present Relation obligeth me) give me leave, (not with any design to obstruct or discourage any ones good Inclinations to the rest, for the effects of the late dreadfull Fire, have

have been so universal that they have all need enough) to minde you more particularly of your *two Hospitals of Bridewell and Bethlem* ; too much (it may be) of late forgotten, in the subsidiary Charities of particular Citizens, though they are inferiour to none in the uses they are appointed for ; and (it may be too) in some respects, of greater publick use and advantage than any of the rest.

For in the *one* of them (that of *Bethlem*, the only Hospital, as I understand of that kinde in the three Kingdoms) the constant Charities which you therein dispense; *imitate the very creating goodness of God*, in the successfull means that are used for the restoring (not of mens lamed and maimed limbs, and members; as in some other of your Hospitals, but) of Humanity it self, to abundance of miserable Creatures, (and the

K more

Dan. 4.
34, 36.

more miserable for that they understand not their own misery, but rather delight and glory in it, and resist as far as they can, the means of their recovery ;) who retain nothing of man, but shape and voyce, to difference them from the worst of Brutes : whose *understanding and reason returning to them* (as *Nebuchadnezzar's* did when he was cured of a like distemper) bless God (and you under him the blessed means thereof,) for their restitution.

Prov. 29.
15.

In the *other*, (that of *Bridewell*,) besides the *imitation of the converting and renewing Grace of God*, (as far as just severities can effect it, and we have no reason to think them altogether ineffectual, seeing the Scripture tells us, that the *rod and reproof*, are means appointed to *give wisdom* ;) in the recovering and reclaiming notorious *sinners from the error of their*

their wayes, and saving their souls from death, wherein the Apostle James placeth a great part of Cha- Jam. 5. ult.
rity: you also strive to resemble his preventing Grace likewise by the constant care taken, and provision made therein, for the Christian education of many miserably necessitous Children in honest Trades and employments; wherein they may get their livelihood by labour, which otherwise, (being trained up to no other course of life but Begging or Thieving,) would be endangered to an almost inevitable ruine both of Body and Soul.

All of whom, may, through Gods blessing on your endeavours (though like the guests in our Saviours Parable, they be many of them gathered up by your Officers *from the High-wayes and Hedges*, and brought into your Government by necessary *compulsion*) prove, as divers of them have

K 2

done,

done, (who, to their own Honour as well as that of your City, and to the Glory of God principally, that directed and enabled you to make such provision for them, have appeared and will hereafter (no doubt) Annually continue to appear in publick to give proof thereof:) honest and substantial Citizens.

A mercy, for which, (next under God, and the general influence of the *Lord Maior* and *Aldermen* of this famous City) they must acknowledge themselves infinitely obliged to the Fatherly care, and diligent inspection of a publick spirited, prudent, vigilant, and active *President* (whose larger character I must forbear at present in tenderness to his modesty) together with the worthy *Governours* his Assistants.

All that I have more to adde, concerning *both Hospitals*, at this Time, is, That, it is to be hoped,

ped, the *blessedness*, you have already (according to my Text) found in your past Beneficences, will encourage you (beyond all the Rhetorick which, if I had it, I could bestow on such an Argument,) to go on, and effectually promote such further designs, as shall be suggested to you for the rendring them more usefull to the ends of these several Foundations.

And here give me leave, (I beseech you) *first* of all, to recommend to you, the *New-Building*, (among all the famous Structures that your City hath raised for publick uses since the last dreadful fire) of your *Hospital of Bethlem*: which I doe upon this consideration, that those who have the particular Inspection of that Hospital, (and especially, that learned and diligent *Physician* who can hardly be valued sufficiently for his great skill, fidelity

lity and industry in that employment) have declared, that they judge it very convenient, if not necessary, (considering the great numbers that are continually sent thither for cure) that their strait Accommodations of Lodging, should be enlarged both as to Capacity and Conveniency; but are discouraged in the pursuance of those thoughts, by the prospect of the great charge thereof far exceeding the proportion of its small Revenues, (the smallest of any Hospital in *London*) except they be assisted by some worthy Persons particular Munificences.

And *next*, on the behalf of your other Hospital of *Bridewell*; it is not unknown to the most of you, that a very great part thereof was restored out of its ruines and rubbish, since the late dreadfull Conflagration, at its own charge: whereupon, their whole

whole Stock being exhausted, and the Building (for a great part remaining) likely to be left unfinished, they must for ever acknowledge the seasonable Assistance of the *Right Honourable the Lord Maior and the Court of Aldermen*, towards the perfecting of the Edifice, out of the publick Purse; without which, those *Wastes*, were like to have been *Desolations of many Generations*.

But yet when that great work is thoroughly finished, (which is now near done) there will (there also) be farther need of additional private Charities.

First, in order to the endowing a School, (already as to the case, built,) for the improvement of the young Nurselings of your Charity, the *Blew Boyes*, in Reading, Writing, and casting Account, &c. at such hours as shall be assigned by the Governours,

with the least intrenchment that may be, upon their Masters occasions. Which, if it were once effected, it is not to be doubted, but some of them that are of riper Capacities, having their education thus heightened, would when they come out of their time, be enabled to apply themselves to more beneficial and advantageous employments, than they can expect the mean Manufactures they are there bred to, will afford them.

And *secondly*, in order to the more liberal rewarding of, the most honest and industrious of them, when they have faithfully served their Apprentiships, with such an encouraging Stock to set up withall; as might enter them into their new Callings with an hopefuller prospect of carrying them on in a thriving and creditable way. Upon which expectation they would (doubtless)

less) more generally be induced, to acquiesce in the services allotted to them, more contentedly, follow their business more diligently, and carry themselves, (in hope of their good word at parting to recommend them to your Bounty) to their Masters more dutifully: and not be tempted, (as too many daily are, by the difficulties of getting a livelihood by their Labours when they are free-men,) to run away, and return again to the worse Trade they were first bred in.

These particulars, I have presumed to suggest to your wisdoms, not to limit them to my conceptions, as if I knew better how to manage your Governments than your selves; but only as probationers for your approbation and effectual concurrence, in case, upon due consideration, you finde them worthy thereof.

Now

Now the Lord give you all so affecting a sense of the Truths I have delivered concerning the *blessedness of Giving* above *Receiving*; that you may be desirous of making experiment of it your selves: and then give you to finde it every way as I have taught you, in your Persons, in your Houses, in your Trades, in your Memories, in your Posterities; and principally, in your Souls, and their everlasting Concerns, in the last and great day of our Lord Jesus: *To whom, &c.*

FINIS.

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